

# **Indo-Japanese Symposium on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

Bangalore, India  
8-9 December, 1997

*Organised by:*

**Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled  
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation  
and**

**National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People**

*In Association With*  
**Directorate General of Employment & Training,  
Ministry of Labour, Government of India**

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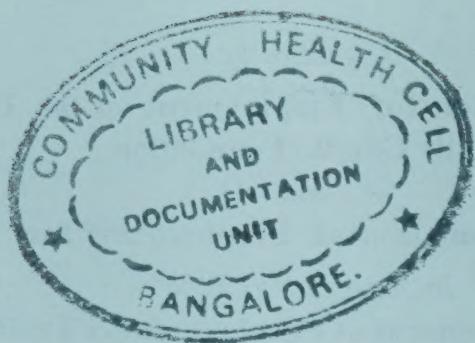
**National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People**

*In Association With*  
**Directorate General of Employment & Training,**  
**Ministry of Labour, Government of India**

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## Foreword

The disabled make up at least 10% of the world's population. This incidence of disability is common to both industrial and developing countries although the sources tend to be different. However, a common feature is that disability is closely linked with poverty.

To ensure full participation for people with disability, they must have equitable access to health, education, information and employment. At present, the disabled face many barriers to participation. One of them is suitable employment.

The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and the Japanese Association for Employment of the Disabled, along with the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People and the Directorate General of Employment & Training, Ministry of Labour organised an Indo-Japanese Symposium on Employment Opportunities for People with disabilities in Bangalore on December 8-9, 1997. The objectives of the symposium were to exchange knowledge and experience on vocational rehabilitation and employment for persons with disability in India and Japan, to review laws and regulations dealing with employment of people with disabilities and to seek participation from the Government and the corporate sector for providing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The participants of the Symposium included experts in the area of disability, both from Japan and India, representatives from the Government, the industry, media and other individuals.

The papers presented and proceedings of the Symposium have been published in the form of this monograph.

New Delhi  
July 1998

Pulok Chatterjee  
Secretary, RGF



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## **WELCOME ADDRESS**

**Dr. V. Krishnamurthy**

**(Executive Trustee, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and  
National Centre for Promotion of Employment for  
Disabled People)**

Madam Chairperson, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi; Mr. Kozo Okabe; Ms. Mari Okutsu; distinguished delegates from Japan; representatives from the Indian corporate sector and NGOs; ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and NCPEDP, let me welcome all of you to the symposium on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities.

I am glad that so many of you have responded to our invitation. We are indeed grateful to you for demonstrating your interest in this important cause. It is appropriate that we hold this symposium in the city of Bangalore because the city's NGOs and the corporate leaders have always supported the cause of employment for the disabled in this country.

Ladies and gentlemen, during his brief lifetime, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi showed great concern for the welfare of the marginalised groups in India. He was conscious that amongst the marginalised groups, people with disabilities were the worst hit. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi believed that a majority of disabled persons could be productive and do a job equally well. In his vision for the future of India, disabled persons would earn a living and live as honorable citizens. He was of the opinion that with advancing technologies more and more of the disabled

can be trained to pursue lucrative vocations.

When the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation was set up, our objective was to carry on the legacy of late Rajiv Gandhi and continue his unfinished agenda. This is being done under the leadership of Madam Sonia Gandhi. The welfare of the disabled forms an important part of the activities of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. In order to give greater thrust to the programme, the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, in association with ACTIONAID, has set up the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP). This has been in existence for the past one year in Delhi, functioning under the leadership of Madam Sonia Gandhi.

The objective of this Centre is somewhat akin to the work of the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled, whose top executives are present today to exchange ideas. I heartily welcome the large delegation from the Japan Association. They have done outstanding work in creating awareness about the problems of the physically disabled, and I am glad that they are here to share their experiences with us.

For the last few decades, the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled has provided disabled persons of Japan with integrated services of vocational assessment, vocational guidance and vocational training. It is the desire of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation that a similar Centre is developed in India. Hence, these efforts to bring those who have achieved a measure of success in Japan to share their experiences with us and guide us in our deliberations.

Ladies and gentlemen, let us make the best use of their stay here for these two days and establish a long-term relationship with the Japan Association and gain through their innovations and experience. Our immediate task at NCPEDP is to identify NGOs from various states that are committed to the cause of disability (particularly in the thrust area of employment) and to support them in setting up job centres for disabled people. These NGOs will help in building up a data bank, coordinate with the local activists and bring business houses and disabled job seekers closer.

The aim of NCPEDP is also to involve the corporate sector in

the process. The policies of the Government so far have tended to promote economic independence of disabled people. These policies have had some impact, but a lot more needs to be done by the Government. I am glad some of the senior civil servants from the Ministries of Welfare and Labour are present here to participate in the discussions. They will gain a lot from the experience, and they will hear of the work done in Japan. They will also hear from the corporate leaders present here and the NGOs on what more is expected of the Government.

Partnership is needed between the public and private enterprises to expand employment opportunities for disabled people. Such co-operation may provide a mechanism to promote employment for disabled people in the private sector. This should be a joint effort between the NGOs and the business community. Success depends on the active involvement and the co-operation of the business and the industry. The employers must adopt a positive non-discriminatory attitude in terms of employing disabled people. It is equally important to bring about a change in the mind-set of disabled people too. The workers who are disabled must become conscious of the need to be engaged in a vocation. They must demonstrate the will and determination to fight it out.

There has been all round slow but steady improvement in dealing with the problems of the disabled during the last fifteen years. However, employment services for disabled persons still remain in a very rudimentary stage. Rehabilitation services for the disabled should be treated as a duty and responsibility of the society. To bring about this attitudinal change in the minds of the general public is crucial.

The potential of the disabled has to be appreciated. It is necessary to put to work the efforts of the Government, the corporate sector and the NGOs. In this series, I would like to stress the role and importance of the corporate sector for they are the ones who will ultimately have to appreciate and help in providing equal opportunities for the disabled.

I welcome the response from the corporate sector that is present

today. Ladies and gentlemen, the campaign to bring people with disabilities more into the mainstream is on. I hope you will join me in my request to Mrs. Sonia Gandhi to lead us.

Thank you.

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## INAUGURAL SPEECH

Sonia Gandhi

**(Chairperson, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People)**

Mr. Kozo Okabe, participants and friends:

A recent study shows that India has one-seventh of the world's population but one-third of the world's disabled and half of the world's blind population. The number of disabled people who are educated or trained represent an extremely small proportion of the total number of disabled people.

This piece of information merely reminds us of something all those present here today would already be aware of—that the rehabilitation and mainstreaming of disabled people in India is a huge task and a major challenge.

My husband believed that empowering disabled people and giving them access to gainful employment was not only possible but necessary—necessary not just for the betterment of disabled people themselves, but also for the progress of our society. During the days of his Prime Ministership, he set up the first national committee to study the dimensions of the problem and recommend steps for the welfare and protection of the rights of the disabled.

At the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, we are committed to these beliefs and goals. Working with the disabled with the objective of making them independent and self-sufficient is one of our major areas of

focus. We have consciously tried to move away from the tragic view of disability, from the traditional approach of charity, and developed programmes that aim at empowering the disabled to help them lead a life of dignity and self-sufficiency.

Promotion of employment of disabled persons is, naturally, a vital component in the series of steps needed to achieve these goals. This is also an area that has been greatly neglected in our country. It is with this background in view that, a little more than a year ago, the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation set up the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People.

I am happy that the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled, the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, the National Centre and the Government have come together today to organise this national symposium and provide a forum for in-depth discussion on all these areas of common interest.

Discussions can be fruitful only if there is a realistic and serious appreciation of the vastness of the problem. Most of India's disabled are poor. Their disability further impoverishes them. Employment or self-employment can become achievable only when the capabilities and skills of the disabled are developed, but most of them have no access to education or training. Even those who receive education seldom progress beyond the school finishing stage. Educational facilities for the disabled are still segregated in India, and the movement towards integration is tardy. There is a great dearth of skilled and trained teachers, counsellors and instructors to address the specific needs of different categories of disabled persons.

In all these years, the Government has done little except provide a reservation quota for public jobs. The need to build up rehabilitation, educational and training facilities, give better access to the disabled to such facilities, and create greater awareness in society has been largely ignored. Even the quota system for Government jobs has not worked well, with jobs going only to certain categories of disabled and large backlogs filling up the registers in employment exchanges.

The Indian corporate sector, the group that can be the strongest player in the campaign for providing jobs for the disabled, has not fully woken up to its responsibilities. Physical accessibility is severely limited because of the large gap between the needs of the disabled and the design and structure of the factory, shop floor and office environment.

On the other hand, there are fresh opportunities today which did not exist before.

For the first time Government has provided a legal infrastructure by passing the Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act last year. This fairly comprehensive Act has increased, and not decreased, the responsibilities of the NGOs, the corporate sector and the citizens. Quick action is called for to start the process of implementation of the provisions of this Act in various areas. A simultaneous campaign must be launched to educate the people about the different aspects of the Act and the rights that have been given under this law to the disabled.

The computer revolution and the advent of new technologies have offered marvelous benefits and great opportunities to us, not merely by making life easier for the disabled, but also by making available more effective equipment and methodologies for providing education and training.

The growth and diversification of the corporate sector under the policy of economic liberalisation has opened fresh avenues. This sector can indeed play a catalytic role in vastly improving employment opportunities for the disabled. Studies have shown that disabled people, if properly trained and given the opportunity, can actually display superiority in areas like regular attendance, punctuality, house-keeping, diligence, keenness to learn and quality control. The corporate sector must understand that disabled people are not looking for a free ride and handouts from the employers—they are looking for equal opportunity.

I have only touched upon some of the areas of concern and challenge. The participants of the symposium will undoubtedly deal

with all these and more. With these words, it gives me great pleasure in inaugurating the Indo-Japanese symposium on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities.

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## OPENING REMARKS

**Kozo Okabe**

**(President, Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled)**

Madam Sonia Gandhi, Dr. Krishnamurthy, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It is my great pleasure and honour to address here at the opening ceremony of the Indo-Japanese Symposium on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities. In response to the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons proclaimed by ESCAP, Asian countries have recognised the need to promote the integration of disabled persons in socio-economic society. The government commitment to improve disability issues is reflected in various programmes that have been carried out in these countries. In Japan, a new long term programme for government measures for persons with disabilities was set forth in 1993 with seven key issues to be promoted and improved. International co-operation and exchange is one of the key issues. We at the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled, have been holding symposia on vocational rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities in Asian countries since 1992, with the co-operation of relevant organisations in each country. Through exchanging experiences and information in these symposia we have reconfirmed that the Asian countries are very keen to take positive action in order to better the situation of people with disabilities

by promoting their employment. We would be grateful if this Indo-Japanese symposium could contribute to the future activities and programmes concerning vocational rehabilitation and employment opportunities in India and Japan. On behalf of the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the initiatives of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People to realise this symposium in Bangalore. I would like to pay my tribute to the Directorate General of Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour for its commitment to support this symposium. My sincere thanks also go to the secretariat members for their contribution and efforts to prepare this symposium. Lastly, as a token of friendship between India and Japan, let me now present this small memento to Madam Gandhi.

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# GOVERNMENT MEASURES FOR PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**Nobuo Matsubara**

**(Specialist, Employment Measures for the Disabled  
Division, Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour)**

## **Employment Measures for Disabled Persons in Japan**

### **I. Government measures for disabled persons in Japan:**

Japan's administration has set forth the "Government Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities" for the purpose of implementing priority measures to realise the seven viewpoints regarding the "New Long-term Program for Government Measures for Persons with Disabilities":

- (1) Living in Communities as Ordinary Citizens,
- (2) Promoting the Independence of Persons with Disabilities,
- (3) Promoting a Barrier-Free Society,
- (4) Improving the Quality of Life (QOL),
- (5) Securing Safe Living,
- (6) Removing Psychological Barriers, and
- (7) Promoting International Co-operation and Exchange.

Measures for employment of persons with disabilities are critical for the promotion of the independence of their daily life, and also, employment security leads to the improvement in quality of life.

### **II. Features of Employment Systems for the Disabled in Developed Countries:**

Generally, welfare-oriented employment measures are implemented via public support to welfare facilities in addition to income maintenance through pensions.

Moreover, there are two models of employment:

- (1) Countries like the United States and Great Britain that aim to eliminate social discrimination of disabled persons, including employment, and secure equal job opportunities for them;
- (2) Countries like Japan, Germany and France that, adopting the concept of social solidarity of employers, make firms hire a certain ratio of disabled persons as their duty, by means of an employment quota system, thereby trying to secure job opportunities for the disabled in a positive manner.

### III. Status of employment measures for the disabled in Japan

- (1) The current situation regarding the disabled (Numerical increase of disabled persons and aggravation of degree of disability).
  - As of November 1991, there were about 2,722,000 physically disabled persons over 18 years of age. As their number grows, the ratio of those severely disabled increases. As of November 1993, some 344,000 physically disabled persons were employed.
  - As of September 1995, intellectually retarded persons more than 18 years of age numbered about 195,000. The number of mentally disabled persons is estimated at around 1,240,000. As of November 1993, some 60,000 intellectually retarded persons were employed.
- (2) Employment Measures for the Disabled:
  - (a) Basic concept
    - It is an important task for government to promote overall measures for persons with disabilities, aiming to realise a society where they can actively work with those without disability.
    - Comprehensive employment measures for disabled persons are based on the Fundamental Policies for Employment of the Disabled (1993-1997).
  - (b) Four important pillars of employment measures for disabled persons:

- Implementation of employment quotas, and the levy and grant systems,
- Vocational rehabilitation.
- Promotion of measures for the severely disabled, and
- Promotion of measures for the intellectually retarded and mentally disabled.

(3) Problems awaiting to be resolved (from the Government Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities):

- (a) Promotion of measures classified by type of disability to achieve the legally required disabled persons employment quota.
- (b) Promoting employment of severely disabled persons:
  - Encouragement to establish businesses employing persons with severe disabilities through joint contribution by local public bodies and a private enterprise, called the “Third Sector System”
  - Co-operation with organisations associated with medical and welfare services to support the employment of severely disabled persons and enhance ways to improve their working and living environment.
- (c) Promotion of vocational rehabilitation measures.

### **Current Situation of Physically Disabled Persons**

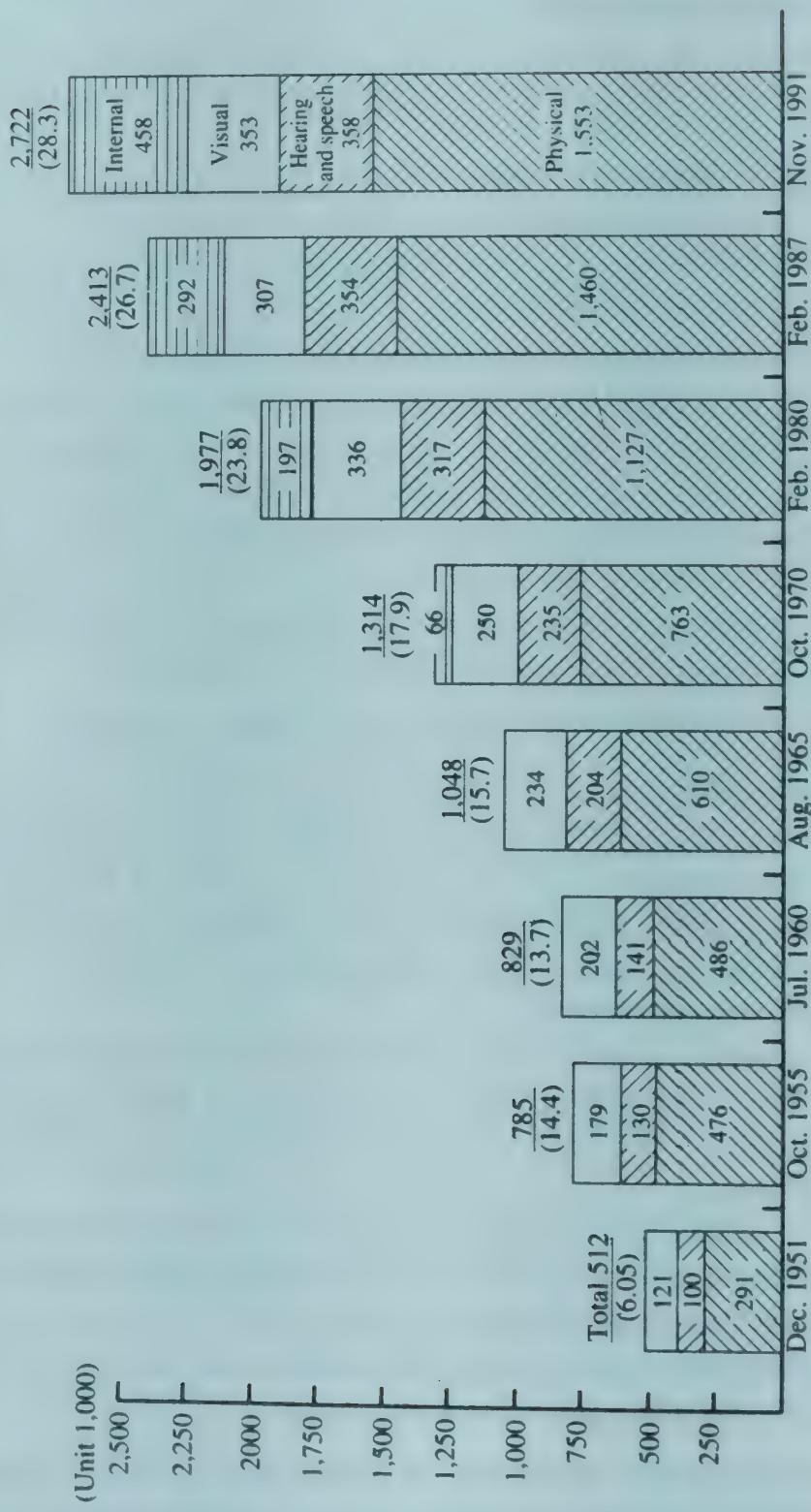
According to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1991, the number of physically disabled persons (18 years of age or over) was 2,722,000. This gives a ratio of 28.3 physically disabled persons per 1,000 of population of 18 years of age or over. In short, about 30 people out of 1,000 have some kind of physical disabilities.

As the number of physically disabled persons has been increasing annually, the above figure shows an increase of some 13% against the figure of the previous survey of the Ministry of Health and Welfare (February, 1987) of 2,413,000 (population ratio: 2.7%). A breakdown of the total number of physically disabled persons in the 1991 survey by the type of disability shows that physical disabilities make up the largest proportion by 1,553,000 (57.1%), followed by internal disabilities by 458,000 (16.8%), hearing and speech disabilities by 358,000 (13.2%), and visual disabilities by 353,000 (13.0%).

### **Actual Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons**

Of the Private enterprises with 5 or more regular employees, the

## Increasing Number of Physically Disabled Persons (18 years old or over)



Note:

Figures in parentheses show the ratio of physically disabled persons in a population of 1000.

Source: Ministry of Health and Welfare, "Survey on the Situation of Physically Disabled Persons," (1991).

ratio of those employing physically disabled persons stands at 12.0%.

The number of physically disabled persons employed in these enterprises is estimated as 344,000 throughout Japan. Of these, 263,000 (76.5%) are men and 80,000 (23.5%) are women. The charts on page 16 show the kind and degree of the disabilities of these physically disabled persons.

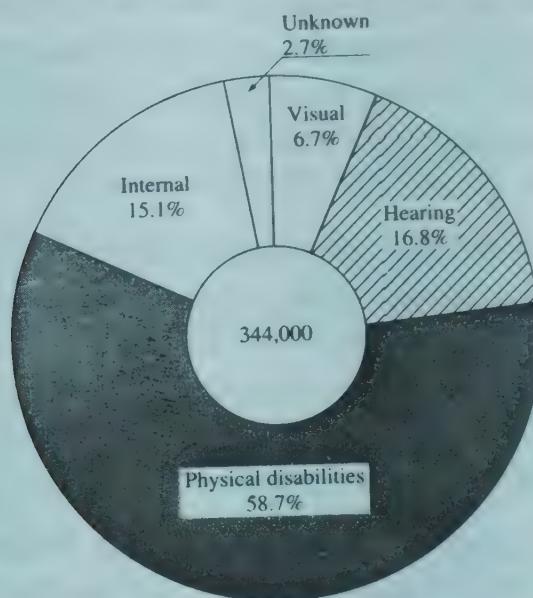
### **Considerations for Physically Disabled Persons**

Of the enterprises employing physically disabled persons, 82.8% "give some consideration" for the workplace conditions, and in the employment management of physically disabled persons. Items of consideration are broken down specifically into the categories as shown in the figure on pages 17 and 18.

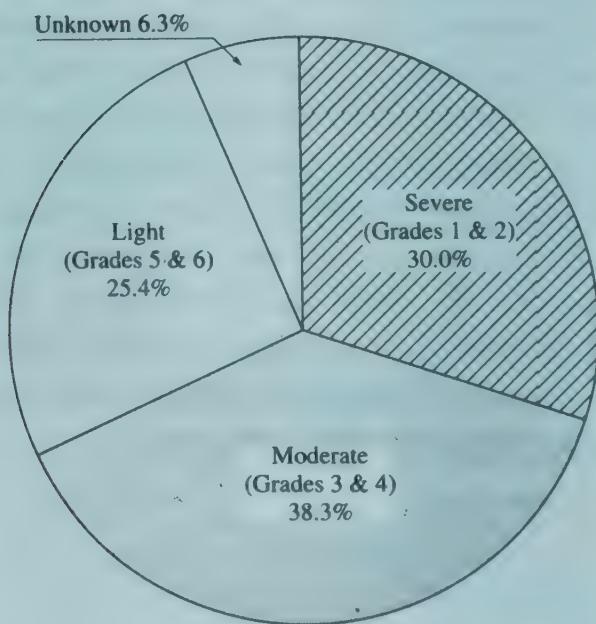
### **Current Situation of Intellectually Disabled Persons**

According to the "Basic Survey on Welfare Program for Intellectually Disabled Children (Persons)" conducted in 1995 by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the number of intellectually disabled children and persons at home is estimated to be about 297,000. The number of intellectually disabled children and persons at rehabilitation centres and other welfare facilities is about 116,000. Thus the total number of intellectually disabled children and persons in Japan is about 413,000. By age groups, 96,300 (23.3%) were intellectually disabled children under 18 years of age and 300,500 (72.8%) were intellectually disabled persons of 18 years of age or over (because the ages of some people are unknown, the total has not come to 100%). Of these, the breakdown by degree of disability shows that 53.6% of intellectually disabled people staying at home are lightly/moderately disabled and 43.2% are severely/most severely disabled.

## Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons by Kind of Disabilities



## Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons by Degree of Disabilities



Note: "Hearing" part in the above graph includes voice and speech functional disorder, equilibrium sense disturbance.

Source: Ministry of Labour, "The Survey on the Actual Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons, etc." 1993

(Items for Consideration)		(Specific Items for Consideration)				Introduction of high-efficiency and -performance equipment: 5.7	
Measures to make work easier and/or safer: 100.0	Improvement of workplace environment: 28.7	Simplification of work process: 20.2	Improvement of workplace machines: 10.5			Others: 26.9	
	Conversion of entrance, stairs etc. into sloped surface: 11.4	Guiding studs for visually disabled persons: 0.5					
Measures to make workplace life easier: 100.0	Installation of accessible toilet: 13.4			Others: 74.7			Assigning and commissioning of sign language interpreters: 3.0
Provision of regular supervisor and/or consultant: 100.0	Assigning of staff in charge of vocational life: 20.9	Assigning of staff in charge of training and education: 15.9		Others: 60.2			

<b>Measures to make commuting easier: 100.0</b>	Securing parking areas for commuting cars: 35.3	Arrangement of shuttle bus for commuting: 11.1	Adoption of staggered working hours: 9.6	Others: 37.3
<b>Provision and/or improvement of welfare and recreational facilities: 100.0</b>	Setting up and/or improvement of resting rooms: 37.1			Others: 49.7
<b>Measures for health care: 100.0</b>	Consideration of working hours: 36.8		Consideration of leaves and vacations: 28.9	Others: 27.9

Note: "Specific Items for Consideration" includes overlapping replies but total number of replies is made to be 100.

Source: Ministry of Labour, "The Survey on the Actual Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons, etc.", 1993.

## Number of Intellectually Disabled Children and Persons at Home by Degree of Disability

	Total	Light	Moderate	Severe Most Severe	Degree Unknown
Inferred number (Unit: person)					
Total	297,100	71,700	87,700	128,300	9,400
Under 18	85,400	22,800	22,700	38,000	2,000
18 or Over	195,300	45,400	60,500	85,400	4,000
Unknown	16,200	3,500	4,500	4,700	3,500
Percentage (Unit: %)					
Total	100.0	24.1	29.5	43.2	3.2
Under 18	100.0	26.7	26.6	44.5	2.3
18 or Over	100.0	23.2	31.0	43.7	2.0
Unknown	100.0	21.6	27.8	29.0	21.6

Source: Ministry of Health and Welfare, "Basic Survey on Welfare Program for Intellectually Disabled Children (Persons)", September 1995.

## Actual Employment Situation of Intellectually Disabled Persons

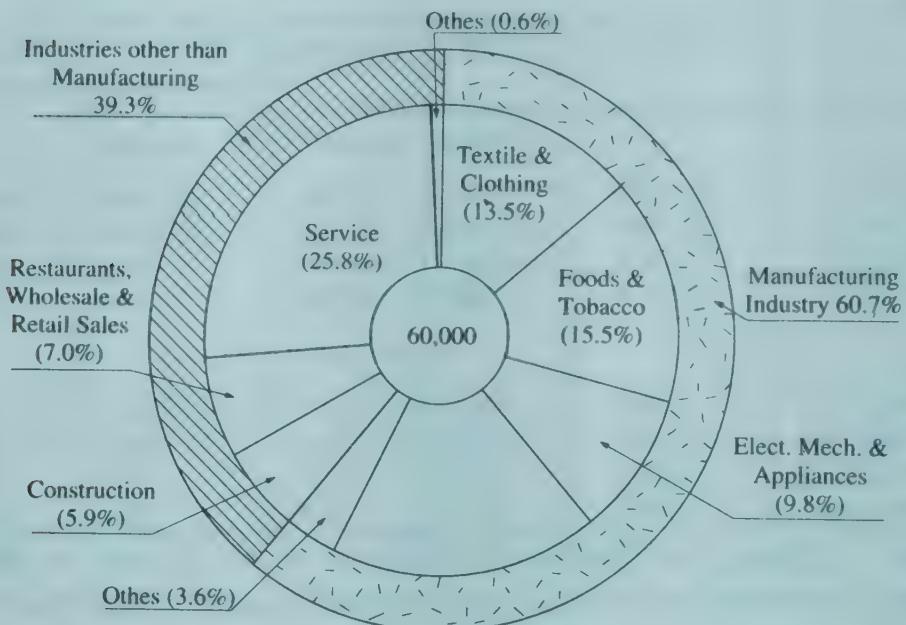
Of the private enterprises with 5 or more regular employees, the ratio of those employing intellectually disabled persons stands at 1.9%.

Regular workers with intellectual disabilities are estimated to be 60,000 throughout Japan, of which 39,000 (65.0 %) are men, and 21,000 (35.0%) are women. When broken down by industry, 60.7% of these intellectually disabled persons are employed by the manufacturing industry, accounting for the highest percentage, followed by 25.8% by service industry.

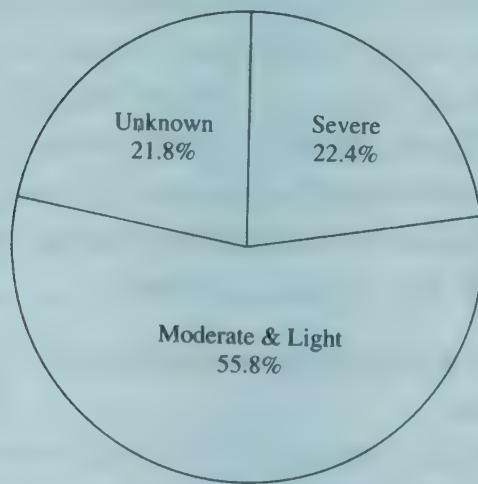
## Conditions for Continuous Employment of Intellectually Disabled Persons

Among the conditions necessary for continuous employment of intellectually disabled persons in enterprises currently employing them, "cooperation of family" is dominant by 82.2%, followed by "cooperation by the administrative authorities concerned" showing 57.7%, and the third was "cooperation of schools and institutions" showing 28.2%.

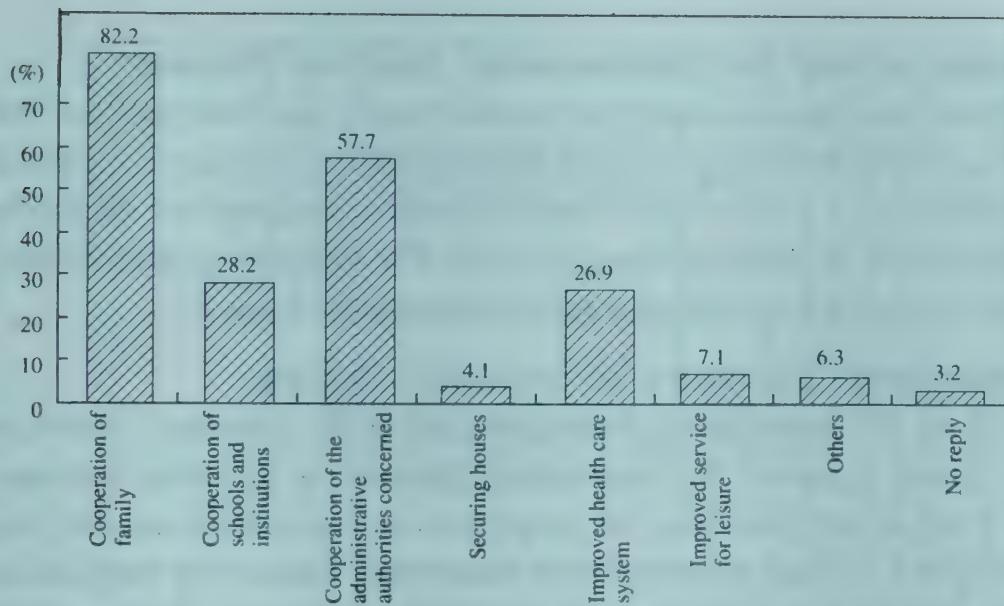
## Employment Situation of Intellectually Disabled Persons by Industry



## Employment Situation of Intellectually Disabled Persons by Degree



Source: Ministry of Labour, "The Survey on the Actual Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons, etc.", 1993.



Note: Some employers gave more than one answer.

Source: Ministry of Labour, "The Survey on the Actual Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons, etc.", 1993.

**(Items for Consideration)**

**(Specific Items for Consideration)**

Measures to make work easier and/or safer: 100.0	Simplification of work proces: 58.6	Improvement of workplace environment: 22.8	Improvement of technical aids. jigs & tools: 72	Others: 11.3
Measures to make commuting easier: 100.0	Adopting of staggered working hours: 29.1	Arrangement of shuttle bus for commuting: 28.1	Securing residence convenient for commuting: 8.8	Others: 34.0
Provision and/or improvement of welfare and recreational facilities: 100.0	Setting up and/or improvement of resting rooms: 46.8	Improvement of recreational facilities and equipment: 6.9		Others: 46.4
Measures for health care: 100.0	Consideration of working hours: 44.6	Consideration of leaves and vacations: 32.0		Others: 23.4

Note: "Specific Items for Consideration" includes overlapping replies but total number of replies is made to be 100.

Sources: Ministry of Labour, "The Survey on the Actual Employment Situation of Physically Disabled Persons, etc.", 1993.

## **Considerations for Intellectually Disabled Persons**

Of those enterprises employing intellectually disabled persons, the ratio of those which "give some considerations" for the work place conditions of and in the employment management of those intellectually disabled persons is 64.0%. The items for considerations are broken down specifically into categories on page 21.

## **Employment Situation of Disabled Persons**

The "Law for Employment Promotion, etc. of the Disabled" institutes the "quota system" for employing physically disabled persons. The system provides that the employers in the private sector who employ 63 regular employees or more (the number of employees equivalent to the exclusion rate is deducted from the total number of employees) shall employ physically disabled persons at a rate of 1.6% or more of the total number of their regular employees. (When intellectually disabled persons are employed, they are to be counted in the same way as physically disabled workers in the calculation of the employment rate.) According to the survey conducted on June 1, 1996, the actual employment rate of physically disabled and intellectually disabled people was 1.47%, an increase of 0.02% from the previous year.

Short-time workers with severe intellectual disabilities are counted in the number to calculate an employment rate. The double count system (one severely disabled employee is deemed equal to two physically disabled employees) can be applied to severely intellectually disabled persons as well as severely physically disabled persons.

## Employment Situation of Disabled Persons in Private Enterprises by Size

(June 1, 1996)

Item No. of Employees	(1) No. of Enterprises	(Note 1) (2) No. of Regular Employees	No. of Disabled Employees		(3) Actual Employment Rate $C \div (2) \times 100 \%$	(4) Ratio of Enterprises having not Reached the Quota %
			(Note 2) A. Severely Disabled (regular)	B. Disabled (Other than A.)		
63 ~ 99	16,231	1,270, 837	5,608	13,517	24,733 (25,147)	1.95% (1.99)
100 ~ 299	27,395	4,086,223 (27,323)	13,203 (4,088,873)	33,838	60,244 (60,561)	1.47 (1.48)
300 ~ 499	5,157	1,742,970 (5,047)	5,524 (1,715,992)	12,335	23,383 (23,284)	1.34 (1.36)
500 ~ 999	3,520	2,166,370 (3,471)	7,132 (2,145,477)	14,905	29,169 (28,728)	1.35 (1.34)
Over 1,000	2,574 (2,571)	7,658,677 (7,766,744)	29,255	51,943	110,453 (109,357)	1.44 (1.41)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54,877</b> (54,537)	<b>16,925,077</b> (16,982,514)	<b>60,722</b>	<b>126,538</b>	<b>247,982 (247,077)</b>	<b>1.47 (1.45)</b>

Notes: 1. The "No. of Regular Employees" means the number of employees to be a basis for calculating the number of legal employment rate of physically disabled people, deducting the number equivalent to that for exclusion rate (the number of employees obtained by multiplying the ratio prescribed for the business categories which have a considerably high ratio of such kind of jobs as considered to be hard for physically disabled persons to perform) from the total of regular employees.

2. "Severely Disabled (regular)", in column A does not include the number of short-time workers. "Disabled (other than A)" in column B includes the number of short-time workers who are severely disabled.

3. The "No. of Disabled Employees" is the total number of physically and intellectually disabled people. According to the law, one "Severely Disabled" person (severely physically or severely intellectually disabled person) in column A is counted as two persons, that is, counted double.

4. The figures in parentheses are as of June 1, 1995.

Source: Statistics by the Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour.

**Employment Situation of Disabled Persons in Private Enterprises by Industry**

(as of June 1, 1996)

Item Industry	(1) No. of Enter- prises	(Note 1) (2) No. of Regular Employees	No. of Disabled Employees			(3) Actual Employment Rate C(2)x100 %	(4) Ratio of Enterprises having not Reached the Quota %
			(Note 2) A. Severely Disabled (regular)	B. Disabled (other than A)	C. Total A x 2 + B		
Agricultural. Forestry & Fishery Mining	96	17,263	54	175	283	1.64 (1.46)	37.5 (41.6)
Construction	50	11,010	46	105	197 (199)	1.79 (1.73)	30.0 (32.1)
Manufacturing	2,134	669,076	2,116	4,440	8,672 (8,501)	1.30 (1.26)	45.5 (47.5)
Food•Tobacco Textiles•Clothes Timber•Furniture Pulp•Paper Publishing	20,476	6,943,415	29,526	59,078	118,130 (120,410)	1.70 (1.71)	35.4 (35.1)
Chemical Ceramics•Earth & Related Products	2,657	740,784	2,683	7,105	12,471	1.68 (36.3)	36.3
Iron & Steel Non-Ferrous Metal	2,071	387,783	1,892	4,738	8,522	2.20 (26.9)	26.9
Metal Products Electrical Machinery	666	116,532	660	1,725	3,045	2.61 (22.2)	22.2
	1,972	471,605	1,942	4,048	7,932	1.68 (38.1)	38.1
	1,830	813,061	2,569	5,820	10,958	1.35 (47.3)	47.3
	788	189,964	727	2,126	3,580	1.88 (30.2)	30.2
	313	188,115	658	1,931	3,247	1.73 (21.4)	21.4
	310	133,437	445	1,066	1,956	1.47 (36.1)	36.1
	1,573	309,719	1,482	3,474	6,438	2.08 (28.9)	28.9
	3,358	1,713,558	8,359	11,203	27,921	1.63 (39.0)	39.0

**(Continued)**

Other Machinery	3,943	1,594,297	6,988	13,142	27,118	1.70	35.4
Others	995	284,560	1,121	2,700	4,942	1.74	38.3
Electricity,	134	194,913	731	1,638	3,100	1.59	51.5
Gas, Heat & Water Supplies					(3,070)	(1.57)	(47.4)
Transportation & Telecommunication	3,098	1,113,243	3,700	10,089	17,489	1.57	41.7
Wholesale, Retail Sales & Restaurant	12,140	3,311,300	8,106	17,358	(17,025)	(1.55)	(41.0)
Banking, Insurance & Real Estate Services	2,128	1,483,385	4,563	9,857	33,570	1.01	67.4
	14,621	3,181,472	11,880	23,798	(32,256)	(0.98)	(67.8)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54,877</b>	<b>16,925,077</b>	<b>60,722</b>	<b>126,538</b>	<b>247,982</b>	<b>1.47</b>	<b>49.5</b>
					<b>(247,077)</b>	<b>(1.45)</b>	<b>(49.4)</b>

Notes: 1. The "No. of Regular Employees" means the number of employees to be a basis for calculating the number of legal employment rate of physically disabled people, deducting the number equivalent to that for exclusion rate (the number of employees obtained by multiplying the ratio prescribed for the business categories which have a considerably high ratio of such kind of jobs as considered to be hard for physically disabled persons to perform) from the total of regular employees.

2. "Severely Disabled (regular)" in column A does not include the number of short-time workers. "Disabled (other than A)" in column B includes the number of short-time workers who are severely disabled.

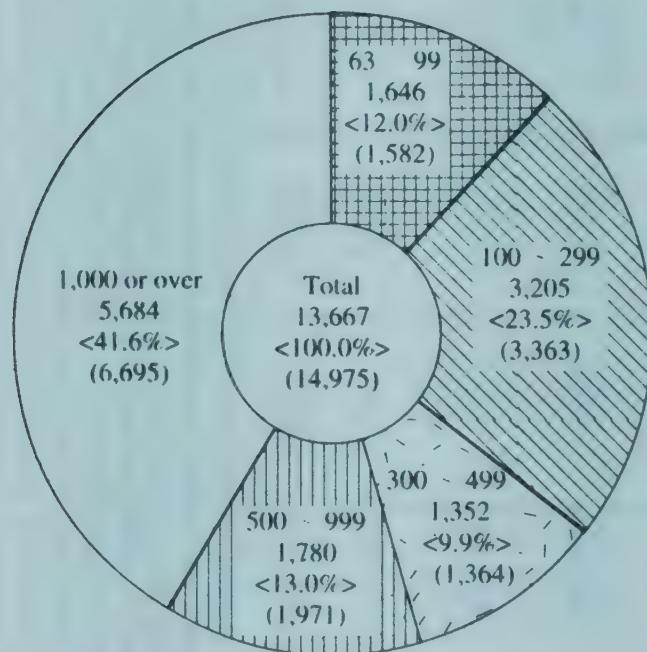
3. The "No. of Disabled Employees" is the total number of physically disabled and intellectually disabled people. According to the law, one "Severely Disabled" person (severely physically disabled or severely intellectually disabled person) in column A is counted as two persons, that is, counted double.

4. The figures in parentheses are as of June 1, 1995.

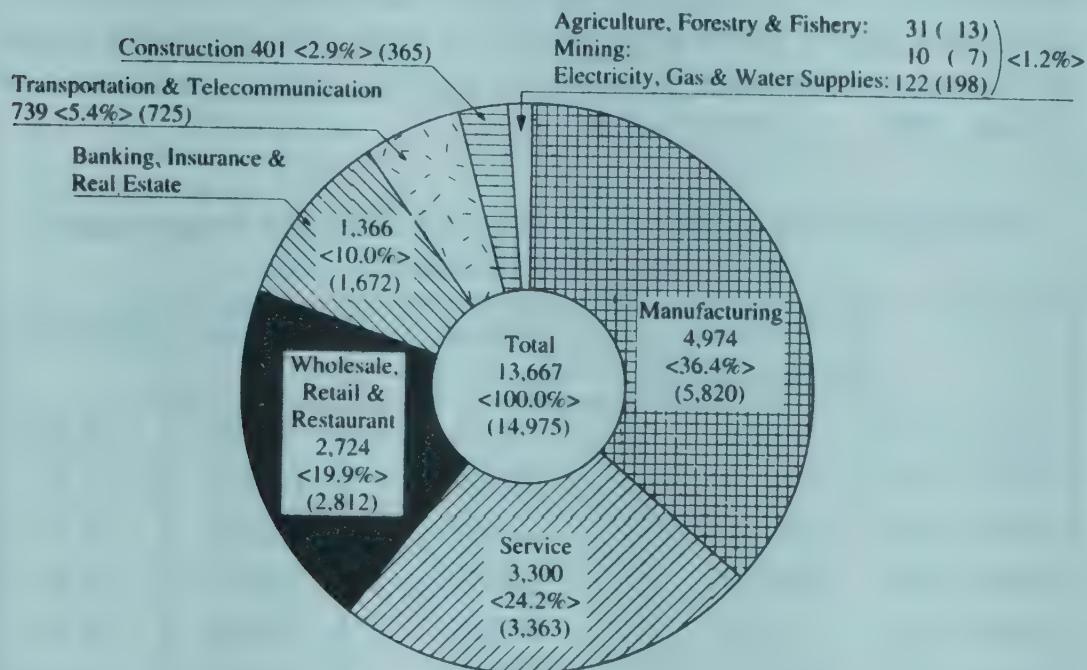
Source: Statistics by the Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour.

In private enterprises having 63 or more regular employees, the number of newly employed disabled people in one year period from June 2, 1995 to June 1, 1996 was 13,667 (14,975 in the previous year). Of these, 5,684 (6,695 in the previous year) were employed by enterprises with 1,000 or more employees, representing 41.6% (44.7% in the previous year) of the total disabled persons newly employed during the period.

**Number of Newly Employed Disabled Persons by Private Enterprises  
(by Size of Enterprises)**



## Number of Newly Employed Disabled Persons by Private Enterprises (by Industry)



Notes: 1. Figures in ( ) are for 1995.  
 2. Figures in < > give the component ratio (%) to the total.  
 3. "Newly Employed Disabled Persons" means those who were employed during the period from June 2 of the previous year to June 1 of the current year, and who are still employed as of June 1 of the current year.  
 4. The number of disabled people is the total of the following:  
 Severely physically disabled persons are counted double  
 Severely intellectually disabled persons are counted double  
 Short-time workers who are severely physically disabled  
 Short-time workers who are severely intellectually disabled

Source: Statistics by the Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour.

## **Disabled People Waiting for Employment**

In the fiscal year 1996, about 74,000 new applications for jobs were submitted by disabled people to the Public Employment Security Offices throughout Japan. While some 28,000 of these new applicants found employment, about 95,000 were still seeking jobs as of the end of March, 1997.

### **Number of Disabled Persons Registered at Public Employment Security Offices**

	Total of Registrations	Active Applicants	Employed	Ineligible
March, 1970	95,279	9,568	80,809	4,902
March, 1978	230,158	29,842	188,949	11,367
March, 1979	247,480	32,917	202,428	12,135
March, 1980	254,677	29,573	213,723	11,381
March, 1981	273,193	32,528	228,396	12,269
March, 1982	291,570	36,925	242,450	12,395
March, 1983	309,960	42,485	253,209	14,266
March, 1984	324,994	45,843	263,936	15,215
March, 1985	333,053	46,772	270,873	15,408
March, 1986	342,179	47,824	277,570	16,785
March, 1987	350,011	51,128	281,894	16,989
March, 1988	347,225	46,763	285,077	15,385
March, 1989	340,908	47,402	279,429	14,077
March, 1990	336,601	55,880	266,527	14,194
March, 1991	341,876	54,276	272,101	15,499
March, 1992	353,814	54,356	283,445	16,013
March, 1993	369,623	61,184	291,714	16,725
March, 1994	386,533	71,157	297,045	18,331
March, 1995	401,955	79,939	301,885	20,131
March, 1996	414,735	88,030	305,239	21,466
March, 1997	426,109	95,515	307,643	22,951

Note: Active Applicants are those willing to work but do not have job opportunities.

## Breakdown of Active Applicants by Part of Disability

(as of March 1997)

Total	Physically Disabled Persons									Intelle- ctually Disabled Persons	Others
	Sub- Total	Visual	Hearing & Speech	Upper Limbs	Lower Limbs	Trunk	Motor function from brain damage	Internal			
95,515	73,930 (100%)	5,664 (7.7%)	12,013 (16.2%)	16,969 (22.9%)	20,226 (27.4%)	4,519 (6.1%)	1,912 (2.6%)	12,627 (17.1%)	16,638	4,947	

Source: Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour.

## Outline of Measures to Promote Employment for the Disabled

Comprehensive measures will be conducted to place the disabled on jobs, as much as possible, according to the type and degree of disability they suffer from, with maximum focus of the measures on the severely disabled.

### Basic Policies of Disabled Person Employment Programme

#### Promotion of comprehensive measures to promote employment for the disabled

- (1) the employment quota rate for the physically disabled levy and grant system for employing physically disabled persons
  - the employment quota rate for the physically disabled (the duty to employ the physically disabled)

Private sector general private enterprises	: 1.6%
special corporations	: 1.9%
public sector (national and local autonomous government)	
nonwork-site organisation	: 2.0%
work-site organisation	: 1.9%
  - levy and grant system for employing physically disabled persons collection of levy from enterprises that have not reached their quota payment of adjustment allowances, incentive payments and various kinds of grants
- (2) promotion of comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program
  - provision of employment information etc. at the Public Employment Security Offices
  - provision of such services as vocational evaluation and work preparation training, etc. at the Vocational Centres for the Disabled (administered by the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled)
  - provision of vocational rehabilitation services within the local areas at the Employment Support Centres for the Disabled
  - Human Resources Development Centres for the Disabled
- (3) securing job sites for the severely disabled
  - development of enterprises employing severely disabled persons (especially based on the Third-Sector System)
  - implementation of the comprehensive model project to promote employment of the disabled in the local areas
- (4) measures on the mentally retarded and the mentally disabled
  - application of measures which are similar to those on the physically disabled, on the mentally retarded except the enforcement of employment quota to employers. However, it will apply from July 1, 1998
  - provision of vocational rehabilitation services including adaptation training to the mentally disabled

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## PRIVATE SECTOR'S INITIATIVES FOR EMPLOYMENT OF THE DISABLED IN JAPAN

Minako Nishijima

(Deputy Director, Labour Legislation Division, Japan  
Federation of Employer's Association)

After the International Year of Disabled Persons, there has been heightened concern about how people with disabilities can take part in normal social activities. In addition, many Japanese companies placed priority on employing people with disabilities and those people in charge of hiring recognised the importance of this issue.

At first, there was limited hiring of those with physical disabilities by companies in the manufacturing industry, but only by companies with advanced employment policies. It was still not common to hire the disabled and most companies preferred to pay the levy to government instead.

The situation has changed in this decade. Companies have become more aware of their social responsibilities and at the same time the Ministry of Labour (MOL) strongly guided companies to improve their hiring of the disabled, since they did not show any inclination to improve their hiring practices. As part of that effort, the MOL decided to make public the names of companies that had not improved conditions despite its instructions.

Though the law had stipulated that the companies that disregard

the ministry's instructions could have their names announced, it had never been done before. The announcement of the company names had a great impact, not only on the companies who had their names announced, but also other companies who were trying to improve their employment practices. At that time, I was the person in charge of this area in IBM Japan, and my company was advised in this area. Therefore, I was kept busy with inquiries from human resources people from other companies concerning strategy and what is the best way to employ the disabled. Progress in this area has been remarkable over the past ten years and I am sure the changes in company policies are well recognised.

Recently, people with less severe disabilities have better opportunities for getting a job because major corporations target them. Employment conditions differ, with some offering the same conditions as other employees, while others do not. In some companies, who are not so familiar with people with disabilities, they give them too much consideration, which can spoil them.

Before this decade, the problem was the non-hiring of people with disabilities, but today the focus has shifted to the quality of their working conditions. People with more severe physical disabilities entail a different set of problems to be solved. For example, persons in wheelchairs have trouble finding jobs because they need special arrangements to commute to work and in the office itself. A lack of consideration for these persons' social lives is a serious problem in Japan.

As Mr. Matsubara explained, employment for the mentally retarded should be included in the company employment ratio from next year. Up to now, most mentally retarded persons have been employed in comparatively small companies and so there is a lack of resources and know-how on employment of the mentally retarded in large corporations. Part of the problem is the additional work required to support these persons in their personal lives (after retirement, parents pass away) which discourages companies from employing them. Therefore, before employment of mentally retarded persons can be considered, a social security net must be in place to ensure

their private lives.

From this point of view, employers insist that the government should take total responsibility for the disabled, especially in the areas of social security welfare and employment security. We understand that companies should employ people with disabilities, but the government or social services should assist in preparing the special working environment necessary for people with disabilities.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I would like to introduce our (employers' associations) new activities in this area. From this October, we started counselling services for management people concerning the employment of the disabled. Upon their request, we provide necessary information and practical advice from a management perspective. We hope it will be helpful for employers and also for people with disabilities.

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## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES IN JAPAN

Mari Okutsu

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### Introduction

The basic framework of vocational rehabilitation services in Japan is set forth in the Law for Employment Promotion, etc., of the Disabled. In line with the basic principle of promoting the vocational independence of disabled persons, the law has two main stipulations. First, it holds that workers who are disabled are to be provided the opportunity to use their abilities in vocational life among other workers constituting economic society. Second, it holds that workers who are disabled must be conscious of the need to be engaged in a vocation, to actively work, to develop their abilities, and to strive for independence as competent working persons.

To achieve this, it will be necessary to put to work the efforts of everyone involved, including the national government, prefectural governments, employers, and of course, the disabled worker themselves. Successfully integrating disabled persons in the labour market will require the realisation of social justice and equity under the principle of normalisation.

The national government has formulated basic policies to comprehensively implement various measures to promote the employment of disabled persons. Necessary items concerning vocational rehabilitation are included among these measures. Thus, it has become possible to build a foundation supporting various efforts to provide vocational

rehabilitation services in a manner consistent with government policy.

Government policy stipulates, for example, that vocational rehabilitation must be implemented comprehensively and effectively in accordance with the type and degree of disability and the desires of disabled persons, their aptitudes, their vocational experiences, and other conditions. Further, if necessary, it must be implemented with appropriate linkage with medical rehabilitation and social rehabilitation measures.

### **Development of Vocational Rehabilitation in Japan**

The history of vocational rehabilitation in Japan can be traced along the lines of the major disasters and wars we have suffered. It was not until 1950, however, that the foundations of the present system were laid by the enactment of the Physically Handicapped Persons Employment Promotion Law. Learning from Western countries, which had made more progress in that field, the Ministry of Labour began forming a system of services, working to improve vocational placement, and providing vocational guidance. Of course, the specific content of the services has been typically Japanese: vocational rehabilitation has to be compatible with Japanese industry, actual social conditions, history, cultural climate, and traditions. Employment management assistance, for example, has been based, with the cooperation of employers, on adapting training and long-term employment. This has been a key to the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation in Japan.

The above law was drastically revised in 1976 to lay the groundwork for even better measures for disabled persons. One of the revisions was the establishment of comprehensive facilities for vocational rehabilitation. I belong to one of these facilities - the National Vocational Rehabilitation Center, which provides vocational evaluation, vocational training and vocational guidance to physically disabled persons in a comprehensive manner. The facilities of this type operate together in a nationwide network, which we refer to as large-region vocational centres. At present, there are 3 such centres located at different places in the country.

The UN International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981, tremendously enhanced the understanding of vocational rehabilitation in Japan. Two factors contributing to this were the active efforts of the government

and the great effectiveness of the mass media. Campaigns implemented through television, in the press, and elsewhere called upon people to promote participation of disabled persons in society. Since then, various types of measures have helped improve the vocational rehabilitation system. For instance, special enterprises which employ severely disabled workers have been established jointly by public organisations and private companies or organisation (Third Sector Method); and a new method for vocational evaluation (on-the-job evaluation method) has been put into practice in the actual premises of these enterprises. Professionals have been trained, groomed, and placed in new vocations. Further, the scope of disabled workers eligible to receive such services has been broadened, encompassing now not only physically disabled persons, but all types of disabled persons, including those with intellectual disabilities or with psychiatric disabilities.

It is particularly significant that the network of vocational rehabilitation facilities established at that time had much the same form as it does now.

### **Network of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

The process of vocational rehabilitation starts by accurately determining the capabilities and aptitudes of disabled persons. It is a process of comprehensive and ongoing assistance up until the disabled person suitably adapts to his vocation and employed life. This means providing him or her with job information, advisory services concerning his or her vocation and other related services. That being the case, the administrative agencies involved include not only the Ministry of Labour, but also a number of others, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. The Ministry of Education is in charge of vocational education and provides advice to students on the future course that they should take, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare is in charge of operating the sheltered employment which secure welfare-related workplaces, etc. The Ministry of Labour is in charge of vocational evaluation, vocational guidance, vocational training and job referral in the open labour market. The job opportunities offered by public employment security offices are particularly important. Entities and facilities involved in vocational rehabilitation regularly go about their work in close coordination with these employment

security offices. There is a special registration system for disabled job seekers in the public employment security offices, which make it possible for them to benefit from very extensive services. After registering their information when applying for work—information on the type of disability, skills, past work experience, etc.—ongoing support and assistance are provided until the individual has become entirely adapted to the job. If a disabled person who has applied for work cannot be immediately placed because of insufficient preparation for employment, he or she is referred to a specialised vocational rehabilitation facility.

The specialised vocational rehabilitation facilities provide vocational evaluation, vocational guidance, and other services. There are many different types of these facilities in different areas. [Fig.1]

Vocational rehabilitation services under the Ministry of Labour are provided on the basis of the Law for the Employment Promotion, etc., of the Disabled. Since 1988, vocational rehabilitation services have been under the control of a single government related organisation—The Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled. The National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation (NIVR) is functioning as the core of all the facilities providing these services. To enhance the quality of vocational rehabilitation service, NIVR handles liaison coordination and general control of the work of those different facilities in different areas. In addition, it conducts various types of surveys, studies and research, and it grooms and trains specialised vocational counsellors for disabled persons

The National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled and other large facilities provide physically disabled persons with systematic services covering large geographical areas in cooperation with the National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Local Vocational Centres for the Disabled provide services to disabled people in close cooperation with related organisations and facilities on the local level. Each of these local vocational centres offers particular services while staying linked as a member of the overall network. [Fig.2]

### **Role of the National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled**

The National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled was

inaugurated as a facility to provide services to physically disabled persons. The centre provides disabled persons with integrated services for vocational assessment, vocational guidance, vocational adaptation guidance and vocational training. It is operated by the Japan Association for Employment of the disabled under the control of the Ministry of Labour. One of the unique aspects of the centre is that it is located on the same premises as the National Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled Persons, which is operated by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. So once a disabled person is rehabilitated medically and has completed the training in activities of daily living provided by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, he/she moves to the next facility which is only a few meters away and starts out on a course of coordinated and integrated vocational rehabilitation services. Disabled persons from throughout the country are accepted at the centre. The centre offers 16 major fields of training, including electronics, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and business management and office skills. [Table 1]

The curriculum of vocational adjustment guidance is also very special. Practical training is provided in "workshops" representing simulated workplaces in a number of different fields. To maximize the usefulness of the guidance, these simulated workplaces are made as similar as possible to actual workplaces in the real world. Trainees can gain positive attitudes about persevering at work as well as basic business manners and other work requirements to get them used to their future positions. Trainees with severe visual impairments are trained with personal computers to widen their employment prospects. Through the use of such assistive devices, their job areas are expanded to clerical work and their employment is facilitated.

The people accepted by the Centre first register as job seekers with their local public employment-security offices and make specific efforts to get jobs through the referral services of those offices.

Before being admitted, applicants have to undergo vocational assessment provided by the vocational guidance department. That takes place after the initial interview. The individual's basic vocational aptitudes and abilities are determined on the basis of an intelligence test and various aptitude tests. There are various other formalities after that for deciding whether or not to grant admission to the Centre and, if admission is granted, a concrete plan of services

called "Vocational rehabilitation plan" is provided. It is a standard policy to always obtain the consent of the person in question regarding the content of his or her vocational rehabilitation plan.

After the trainees are admitted, they receive vocational guidance and vocational training from vocational counsellors and vocational training specialists. At the same time, they make effective use of the employment counselling and job referral opportunities provided through close coordination and cooperation between the Centre and the public employment security office. In addition to furthering their efforts to seek work, this helps to develop their vocational independence. As a rule, admitted trainees can receive these services for any period from four months to a year, depending upon the progress they make in rehabilitation. After completing the services at the Centre, most of them go to the localities where they will be working, which are spread throughout the country. For a period of one year after completion of services at the Centre, follow up services are provided to determine how the individual is doing at his or her place of work. Even if the person has not been able to find a job, the centre continues to furnish information for a certain period of time in order to provide as many possibilities as possible in his or her ongoing job-seeking efforts.

In addition to the department providing these direct services, the Centre has a research department that engages in practical research on rehabilitation of disabled persons. This research, carried out in cooperation with the services department, focuses on the development of vocational training methods geared to the particular features of different disabilities and the development of assistive devices to facilitate employment of disabled workers.

Throughout the 18 years of operation of the Centre, it has consistently placed about 80% of its trainees in new vocations.

## **Support to Employers**

Private employers must be afforded employment management assistance to successfully promote the hiring of disabled persons. As anyone can clearly see, the vocational rehabilitation services provided to disabled persons themselves are well devised and carefully thought

out, and it is easy to impart to the general public an understanding of these services. But it is also true that the employers who hire disabled people have to make many adaptations and special arrangements in order to avoid problems in their operation and activities. Often they have a considerable burden on their shoulders in terms of design of job content, provision of special equipment and facilities in the workplace, and efforts to ensure smooth human relations. In Japan, the national government and the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled play a core role in advising and assisting employers with employment management after they hire disabled persons. The advice and assistance extends from placement in particular job positions and education and training all the way to eventual retirement. For example, they provide technical expertise for provision of special equipment in the workplace, subsidise the expenses for this equipment, and subsidise the expenses of hiring disabled persons by providing part of their salaries. Diversified and practical measures by the national government are needed to integrate disabled persons into the labour market.

## **Conclusion**

It would be difficult to achieve positive results in rehabilitation of disabled persons without government efforts and understanding on the part of the general public. Furthermore, the specialised personnel who provide vocational rehabilitation services to disabled persons must always strive to enhance their specialised skills, to improve their work, and to devise better techniques with which to provide their services.

At the same time, work and employment must be considered within the framework of the economic activity of the country as a whole. Specialisation in vocational rehabilitation requires a broad perspective and flexible thinking — we must have a correct grasp of the mechanisms, workings, and trends of society as a whole. In closing I would like to stress that those engaged in vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons have to have a strong commitment to the employment of disabled persons, and to be specialists in the true sense of the word.

**Figure 1: Vocational Rehabilitation Related Facilities**

Ministry of Labour (prefecture)	Employment Promotion Project Corporation	Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled (JAED)	Labour Welfare Project Corporation	Ministry of Health and Welfare (prefectures)	Ministry of Education (prefectures)
Ministry of Labour (prefecture)	Employment Security Offices Vocational Ability Development Centres for the Non-disabled Vocational Ability Development Training Centres for the Disabled Employment Support Centres for Disabled Persons	Skill Development Centre Cultural centres and sports facilities for workers with disabilities	National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation (NIVR) National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled (NVRCD) National Kibi-Kogen Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Spinal Cord Injured Local Vocational Centres for the Disabled	Workmen's Compensation Hospitals Health Examination Centres Workmen's Compensation Rehabilitation Centre	Social Welfare Offices Rehabilitation counseling centres Rehabilitation and care facilities Schools for the blind, schools for the deaf and schools for physically disabled students/mentally retarded students

**Figure 2: Vocational Rehabilitation Network**

<p><b>National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation (NIVR)</b></p> <p>(established on the basis of Art. 9.2 of the Law for Employment Promotion etc. of the Disabled).</p>		
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation Department</b> supervision of services management work staff training	<b>Planning Department and Researchers</b> survey and research information provision	<b>Vocational Rehabilitation Centre</b> vocational assessment vocational guidance work preparation training vocational courses job readiness guidance employer assistance
<b>Supervision of services training, facility management</b>	<p><b>National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled</b> (established on the basis of Art. 9.3 of the Law for Employment Promotion, etc. of the Disabled and Art. 16 of the Vocational Ability Development Promotion Law):</p> <p>vocational assessment, vocational guidance, vocational training and vocational adjustment guidance</p>	
	<p><b>National Kibi-Kogen Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled</b> (established on the basis of Art. 9.3 of the Law for Employment Promotion etc. of the Disabled and Art. 16 of the Vocational Ability Development Promotion Law):</p> <p>vocational assessment, vocational guidance, vocational training and vocation adjustment guidance</p>	
	<p><b>Local Vocational Centres for the Disabled</b> (one in each prefecture, total of 47)</p> <p>(established on the basis of Art. 9.4 of the Law for Employment Promotion etc. of the Disabled):</p> <p>vocational assessment, vocational guidance, work preparation training, vocational courses, supportive program for on-the-job adjustment training, employer assistance</p>	<b>Furnishing of information and technical assistance</b>

**Table 1: Capacity by Training Categories, Training Term According to Training courses and Content of the Training (1/2)**

Training Category	Capacity	Training Course	Training Term	Content of the training
Machinery	30	Machine Processing	1 year	Mechanic course: Maintenance, inspection and basic elements of lathes and milling machines and processing of application parts NC mechanic course: Basic training in lathes and milling machines and programming and operation of different types of NC machine tools
		Mechanical Drawing	1 year	Drafting of drawing of machine constituent parts and other parts and assembly drawings and sketching, design etc.
Industrial arts	15	Jewellery Making	1 year	All aspects of production and basic design of rings, brooches, pendants and other jewelery.
Design	15	Interior Designing	1 year	Design of interior space and design of equipment and apparatus as well as design by CAD and computer graphics (CG)
Painting	10	Metal Painting	1 year	Painting of metal products, etc.
		Wood Painting	1 year	Painting of wood products, etc.
Apparel	10	Machine Sewing	1 year	Making of women's, children's, men's and other garments using industrial sewing machines
Type-1 Information Processing	20	Office Automation Operator	1 year	Knowledge about hardware and software, problem solving techniques, information analysis, programming, how to use PC software and how to operate computer systems and networks
Electric and Electronic	25	Electric Equipment	1 year	Production, inspection, repair and simple design of sequence control panels, use of programmable controllers, electrical equipment, CAD
		Electronic Equipment	1 year	Assembly and inspection of electronic apparatus, printed circuit board design, electronic circuit design, and electronic control hardware and software and CAD
		Computer Control	1 year	Design of software of control apparatus using computers and assembly and adjustment of electrical control circuits, automatic control devices, etc. of machine tools, etc.

**Table 1: Capacity by Training Categories, Training Term According to Training Courses and Content of the Training (2/2)**

Training Category	Capacity	Training Course	Training Term	Content of the training
Office Management	60	Business Accounting	1 year	Knowledge and skills concerning bookkeeping, tax laws, computers, etc. and office accounting work from the viewpoint of management
		Clerical Work	1 year	General affairs and other similar office work, domestic transactions and preparation of related documents and forms and office works using things like integrated tabular calculation software
		Office Automation Operation	1 year	Office work processing skills using word processors, personal computers and other OA machines and knowledge concerning bookkeeping, calculation work, correspondence work, general theory of OA and other related knowledge
		Telephone Operation	1 year	Learning of telephone operators skills bearing in mind the need to be accurate, fast, polite and kind and to act flexibly according to the circumstances
Printing Book Binding	15	Plate Making	1 year	Basic knowledge and skills concerning printing, character layout, illustration, lettering, color coordination and designation for photograph character printing and compilation and editing using personal computers (DTP)
Total	200			

\* Regarding the training time, it is possible to extend it by up to one more year depending on the state of acquisition of skills.

## **Vocational Adjustment Guidance in FY 1997**

### **Purpose:**

Nurturing of basic requirements of an employed person and enhancing of ability to adapt to employment by providing guidance, assistance, etc. geared to individual abilities

<b>Period</b>	<b>Content</b>
As a rule, 4 months	-Acquisition of necessary work skills for an employed person
Maximum of 6 months	Order-made curriculum geared to individual abilities without considering fixed ideas of standard vocational training concerning job types and skills. Working for flexibility at work levels that the individual is capable of. Through training in basics through repetition.
	-Acquisition of the ability to work together with others that is required of an employed person (maintenance and improvement of human relations in employment environments, learning of etiquette, etc. concerning daily living with others)
	-Improvement of the work environment for enhancement of work efficiency and widening of the scope of work
	-Implementation of guidance to use assistive devices for those with serious visual impairment (how to use assistive devices and their software necessary to do office work)

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## DISCUSSION—RESPONSE TO JAPANESE DELEGATION

**Salil Chaturvedi, Editor, India Feature Service, New Delhi:** In a quota system, once a disabled person is hired, the responsibility is over. You have got some one sitting there and you have got a figure that says, "We have employed so many people." Giving quotas ensures appointments but how do you monitor that they move up by way of promotions and get to do a lot of work?

**Mari Okutsu, Director, Vocational Guidance Department, Japan:** Although there is a legislation that covers employment, the responsibility for growth and promotions is taken by the person responsible there in the industry. He keeps track of the work performance and ensures that the employee moves up and gets promoted in the industry. The employers also try to ensure that there are persons in charge of disabled workers. They will keep a tab on all the disabled workers and ensure that they get the right opportunities to go up.

**Minako Nishijima, Deputy Director, Labour Legislation Division, Japan Federation of Employers Association:** By and large, the job done has to be paid for. There should be a salary paid and we ensure that the right salaries are paid, and also that the person is capable of doing the work entrusted to him. If it so happens that the person recruited is not matching the expectation of the company, then, either he is shifted to a more suitable industry or given appropriate training so that he fits in properly.

**Question\*:** Japan has high levels of automation and robots substitute people in many areas. Do you think that this is an impediment in the way of employment for the disabled?

**Nobuo Matsubara, Specialist, Employment Measures for the Disabled Division, Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour:** There are some traditional Japanese vocations that suit the blind, for example, massage and acupuncture, where automation does not play a role. But there are also new technologies that are coming in. We have adapted our computers so that the blind can manage them. So, technology upgradation has not come in the way of employment of the disabled but is, on the contrary, helping them. We are thinking seriously about other ways of making vocational rehabilitation more effective.

**Prof. R.S.Chauhan, National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun:** Mr. Matsubara, you said that there are 13 % blind persons in the total population of disabled persons. But, do blind persons get the jobs in the same proportion? And are the visually impaired persons now receiving jobs in high government positions as in India, because when I was in Japan many blind people said that they are discriminated against?

Ms. Nishijima said that private employers are frightened that their name will be announced if they do not employ disabled workers. Even though they may resort to employing the disabled under pressure, do they have good, positive experiences by employing disabled persons, or are there some down sides too?

**Nobuo Matsubara:** The area or the scope for disabled persons is rather small. Blind employment is relatively smaller compared to the other disability conditions, specially when compared to the deaf. The next question was whether the blind are hired for government jobs, so the answer is—the percentage is still very small. I do not have the specific statistics at the moment, but it is a low figure.

**Mari Okutsu:** Of course, initially the industry employed disabled people under pressure. In the initial stages of the programme, the response was not so great but over a period of time the attitudes have undergone a positive change.

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\*Wherever it was not possible to identify the speaker and it was felt that the question was important, we have included the question as it is.

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## THE ROLE OF NCPEDP

**Javed Abidi**

**(Executive Director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People)**

Good afternoon everyone; welcome to all of you on behalf of NCPEDP. Our trustee, Dr. V. Krishnamurthy has already given an introduction about the Centre to you, when he spoke earlier today. Our Chairperson, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, also made a mention during the inaugural address.

The specific task which has been given to me is to speak about the promotion of employment opportunities for people with disabilities in India and the role, in our view at least, that NCPEDP can play in that. Before we get into that, it is very important for us to understand some bare facts: 5-6% of India's population is affected by disability, and that also is a conservative estimate, which basically means that about 60 million people in this country are affected by disability. I would not be surprised if at the end of the presentation somebody would challenge that figure and say that 10% of India's population is affected by disability. It is not important for us to know this merely as a figure but to know it as a fact. Disability is not something that can be swept under the carpet; disability is not something that can be wished away. 60 million is a very large population—larger than the population of some countries of the world; certainly larger than the population of some states in India. So, it is an issue that has to be taken seriously.

The Indian Disability Act 1995 defines a 'disabled person' as a person with blindness, or low vision; those who are leprosy cured; hearing impaired; those who have locomotor disabilities; or mental retardation or mental illness. You may have noticed that there are several groups, which are not listed here such as people with learning disabilities, autism, haemophilia, and thalassemia. When we say 60 million or when we say 5 to 6%, it does not include some very key groups, which should be included.

I would like to list some more facts for you. As far as employment for the disabled in this country is concerned, the first employment exchange for disabled people was established in Bombay in 1959. In 1977, the Government announced 5% reservation in jobs but only in the 'C' category and 'D' category posts. The Directorate General of Employment and Training has set up 23 special employment exchanges for the placement of disabled persons in the country. In addition, there are 55 special cells that have been set up in the regular employment exchanges. There are 17 vocational training centres to top that. According to the National Sample Survey of India 1991, there were at that time 7 million disabled people who were qualified for employment. 7 million in 1991!

A distressing fact is that in the last 40 years, we have been able to place only 1,00,000 disabled people in jobs in this country. In 1981, because it was the International Year for the Disabled, because there was greater focus on disability, about 12,500 persons were placed in jobs. Then the placement rate dropped to about 6,000 disabled people per annum and in the 90s to about 4,000 disabled people per annum!

There is an indication here that when there is focus on disability, results materialise. It is not that the jobs are not there, or that qualified employable disabled people are not there. We interpret it as a lack of administrative will, a lack of political will; it is a question of not looking at disability seriously.

Some people say India is a country with a very large population and therefore, it is difficult for us to do things in India. But let us see what is happening in China? It is also a large country, with

a large population, and they have not been particularly good with their special education for disabled children. Nevertheless, they have been very successful in providing jobs for disabled people. There are almost 1,600 'welfare factories' where about 40% of the work force is disabled. They have a system of incentives in place: any enterprise that gives more than 35% employment to disabled people is given exemption on business income tax. Those who employ more than 50% disabled people do not have to pay any tax at all. And if a disabled person wants to set up an industry or an enterprise, that person also does not have to pay any tax. It is these incentives which have resulted in a tremendous advance in employment of the disabled in China. Out of all the disabled people who are employable, 70% have already been placed. So again, it is a question of will, that if we wish to, we can!

Our friends from Japan have already told us extensively about the excellent work that they are doing. Therefore, I am not going into any details. The system there is different from the Chinese system but the results are equally impressive.

They have already explained to you the 'Levy and Grant System' through which they have achieved considerable success. One must note that in Japan bigger companies set up subsidiary organisations that are managed mostly by disabled people. There is a buy back guarantee from the subsidiary by the parent company. All these formulae and possibilities can be considered by our friends in the corporate sector as well as the government.

So where does that leave us? And what does the future hold for us? Earlier we did not have any legislative backing—there was really no monitoring mechanism, no watchdog or agency or system that would keep an eye on things. Otherwise how do we explain that inspite of having 23 special employment exchanges, 55 special cells, and 17 vocational training centres, we have been able to place only about 1% of our disabled people in jobs.

Our Centre certainly would be very interested in doing studies in the coming months to find out the cost-benefit ratio? How much money have we spent on these agencies and what have we actually

got out of them? And why is it that the placement ratios continue to be so low?

The enactment of the **Disability Act 1995** has made the situation very different. The Act was approved by the Hon'ble President of India on 1st January 1996 and was formally notified by the Government on 7th February 1996. For now, I'll restrict myself to the chapter on employment. There are ten clauses:

**Clause 32A** is about the identification of jobs. In our view, this identification of the posts should be done by the experts from the disability sector and they must be involved in the process. We have seen in the past, there were complaints that there were several jobs, an amazing number of jobs, which to our mind can be performed by people with disabilities but the government in its wisdom did not have them on the job list! We strongly feel that people from the disability sector who have knowledge and understanding of the subject should be involved in the process.

In the same clause, part **32B** says that the lists of the posts should be revised and updated at least once every three years. So, now it is an obligation on the part of the government to update the lists. Our suggestion is that developments in technology should be taken into consideration at the time of updating the lists. Technology is developing at a fast pace. A variety of technologies are coming up and a number of jobs which were earlier not possible for persons with disabilities can now be easily performed by them. The technological advances must be kept in mind.

**Clause 33** mandates 3% reservation in vacancies of identified posts in every concerned establishment (1% each for the visually impaired, for the hearing impaired and for those with locomotor disabilities). Our concern in this regard is about the citizens with mild mental retardation and those with disabilities not yet recognised by the Government of India. I was very happy to hear from our Japanese friends that similar concerns were expressed in Japan also.

**Clause 34** mandates that the employers will furnish information on vacancies to special employment exchanges. It means that all the employers who are covered under the **Disability Act 1995** shall



keep the special employment exchange of their area informed about the vacancies that occur so that the 3% reservation can be applied. In this regard, it goes without saying that very close monitoring is required and this monitoring cannot be at the national level alone. It is just not possible in a country as big as India. So, it will have to be at the state level. It should actually be at the district level and may be even further down. I am consciously emphasising on this because as far as the NGOs in the disability sector and activists are concerned, I think it should be ultimately our duty to play a very active role in monitoring this. We cannot just simply sit back and expect the government to be doing this on their own. We have to play a role; the role of a very active partner.

**Clause 35** states that individuals or organisations will be given power by the government to inspect the records of any establishment or any employer. This, no doubt, is a very powerful clause, provided it is used in the right way. Who will do this inspection? We feel that it should be a partnership between the Government, the NGOs, and the activists. There should be committees with representation of government officials, people from NGOs and disabled persons. Committees with real power, who can enter the office of any employer at any time and check the records.

**Clause 36** provides that vacancies earmarked for disabled people that are not filled up in a certain year should be carried forward to the next year. We feel that this also needs very close monitoring at all levels.

**Clause 37** mandates that the employers should maintain records of persons with disabilities who are employed in their establishment, which can be inspected on any given day, at any given time by organisations that are empowered to do so. Once again, we feel there should be a partnership between the Government and the NGOs.

**Clause 38** requires that the Government and local authorities should formulate schemes for ensuring employment for persons with disabilities, training and welfare of disabled people, relaxation of the upper age, health and safety measures, and creation of a non-handicapping environment. NCPEPD firmly believes that we can

not look at employment in isolation. Employment is simply not possible by itself unless the atmosphere is disabled-friendly, and factors such as health-care needs and education are fulfilled. We feel that the central government is just a cog in the wheel and that the local governments, NGOs and activists would all have to join hands and monitor the situation.

**Clause 39** mandates that all Government educational institutions and even those receiving aid from the Government, should reserve at least 3% seats for persons with disabilities. It is, therefore, now compulsory for the Government institutions and institutions that receive aid from the Government to make this reservation. We strongly feel that this clause should be immediately and vigorously implemented. All of us in the sector should monitor this closely.

**Clause 40** tells the appropriate Governments and local authorities to reserve not less than 3% vacancies for disabled people in all poverty alleviation schemes.

**Clause 41**, which we believe is the **Golden Clause**, mandates that appropriate Government and local authorities shall, within the limits of their economic capacity and development, provide incentives to employers (both in the public sector and in the private sector) to ensure that at least 5% of their work force is composed of persons with disabilities. We have called it the Golden Clause because, in it, for first time, the word incentive has been used. Secondly, for the first time in the legislative history for the disabled in India, the term private sector has been actually mentioned. As the clause very clearly says, it is not mandatory; we cannot enforce it on the private sector. But what the law is saying is that those who in their wisdom decide to give more than 5% employment to disabled persons will be given incentives. And I am happy that the term private sector is there as it is a motivation for them to consider this. The term incentive however has been left undefined. How will those who actually give more than 5% employment to the disabled benefit? What are the incentives? Will it be a shawl and a certificate at the end of the year or will it be something more concrete? Something more realistic such as tax cuts or grants? It is time that the Government

spelt out the incentives.

It is a good time in a certain way as it is December and in three months we will be having the next budget. It is another thing that the political situation is unstable! Nevertheless, it is a good time to begin this debate and we hope that this symposium will act as a catalyst in that direction. Simultaneously, some kind of a discussion will have to emerge from the side of the private sector as to what is their view of disability and how they feel about giving employment to persons with disabilities.

So, in brief, these are the highlights of the Disability Act 1995 but then what is law? The poem titled 'Law?' by W.H.Auden which I shall read now may give us some insight:

Law, says the judge as he looks down his nose,  
Speaking clearly and most severely,  
Law is as I've told you before,  
Law is as you know I suppose,  
Law is but let me explain it once more,  
Law is The Law.

Yet law-abiding scholars write;  
Law is neither wrong nor right,  
Law is only crimes  
Punished by places and by times,  
Law is the clothes men wear  
Anything, anywhere,  
Law is Good-morning and Good-night.

Others say, Law is our Fate  
Others say, Law is our State  
Others say, others say  
Law is no more  
Law has gone away.  
And always the loud angry crowd  
Very angry and very loud  
Law is WE  
And always the other idiot softly ME.

So, in all this, ladies and gentlemen, where does NCPEDP fit in?

We would like to make it very clear through this symposium that NCPEDP is not another special employment exchange, or a placement agency. Neither is it a service delivery organisation. And it is definitely not a funding agency. NCPEDP, to our mind, is an advocacy organisation and an interface. We view ourselves as a catalyst for change. We have already circulated our 'Policy Document' and please do look at it carefully. If you have any questions, we are here till tomorrow. We will be happy to answer them. The document gives you our vision, our mission and objectives that we have laid down for ourselves.

On 3rd December, the World Disability Day, NCPEDP organised an event in Delhi 'The Walk to Freedom', at the end of which we presented a Memorandum of Request to the Hon'ble President of India which contains the following ten points:

- (1) The number of the Special Employment Exchanges should be raised from 23 to 100 in the Ninth Plan period.
- (2) The number of vocational rehabilitation centres should be increased from 17 to at least 50 in the Ninth Plan period.
- (3) The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation, which has been set up by the Government recently, should not only provide financial assistance but also technical assistance, including assistance in marketing.
- (4) A decision taken a number of years ago to give 15% price preference to organisations for the disabled in the purchase of products from them should be made applicable to self-employed disabled persons also.
- (5) All poverty alleviation programmes of the Government should make a special effort to ensure that at least 3% are disabled beneficiaries.
- (6) At least 25 production and training workshops should be established in the country in the Ninth Plan period for severely disabled persons, including mentally retarded persons.
- (7) A National Corporation for the setting up and management of these production and training workshops (which are also known as sheltered workshops) for disabled people should be established so that in the long run every district has such a workshop which can provide locally manufactured consumer goods.

(8) The incentives to employers mentioned in the Disability Act must be defined.

(9) A national programme for promoting rural employment for the disabled should be launched in the Ninth plan period.

(10) The number of disabled persons engaged in jobs or self-employed should be doubled in the Ninth Plan period.

Some of you may wonder that on one hand we are saying that inspite of all these special employment exchanges and these special cells nothing much has been achieved so far. So why then are we asking for an increase in their number? Our view is that the results were poor because there was no monitoring mechanism. Now, with the passage of the Disability Act 1995, we are anticipating the situation to change. It is important that we have more such bodies so that the network is spread throughout the country. This, followed up by stringent monitoring will certainly yield good results.

In the past, we were not existing entirely in isolation. There were linkages between the NGOs and the Government and to an extent with international agencies. Links that are crucial from the employment point of view were perhaps missing or were at least not to the level that they should have been. In the present scenario we have got the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People that is meant to link the various concerned sectors and to provide an interface between these sectors. So we are approaching the NGOs, Government, people with disabilities, international agencies, industry and trying to build up an interface.

In the future, hopefully, there will be strong linkages between all concerned. It is a very challenging and ambitious task indeed. But we all have dreams and sometimes when you dare to dream, they do come true! It is the dream of NCPEDP and its trustees, our friends, our colleagues and we have faith that this dream will come true. But it can only come true with your co-operation. This includes the corporate sector, the media, and international agencies.

If all of us were to join hands and were to seriously look at disability and the issue of employment for disabled persons, the future would be very bright indeed.

Thank you!

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## DISCUSSION—THE ROLE OF NCPEDP

**(Javed Abidi, Executive Director, NCPEDP, responds to questions from the audience)**

**Dr. S.C.Handa, University of Roorkee:** Mr. Abidi, you mentioned that when you presented the paper to the President asking for certain things, in the poverty alleviation programmes you asked for 3 % of the total budget to be reserved for the disabled. We know that the minimum population of the disabled is 10 %, and we also argue that this sector has been neglected for fifty odd years. So we must ask for more from the government whenever we make a demand, because, through the Finance Ministry generally what you ask is reduced! My request is that, in future, we should ask for more than what we deserve so that we get at least what we deserve.

**Javed Abidi, Executive Director, NCPEDP:** Your point is well taken. The only comment I have to make is that in the memorandums and the various requests that we make from time to time, it has been noticed that some times we end up asking for impossible things. And what happens then is that it is not taken as seriously as it should be. We worked very hard with the Government last year when the budget was being prepared, after the passage of the Act. Some people were asking for an allocation of Rs. 400 crores. Now, we can debate as to whether it is a strategy to ask for 400 crores and then get at least sixty, seventy, or even eighty crores. The other approach could be to put a figure that is comparatively more

pragmatic for that period of time. But your point is well taken, certainly.

**Prof. R.S.Chauhan, National Institute of Visually Handicapped, Dehradun:** In many instances, a disabled person can perform better with the aid of an equipment or electronic gadget, which might be expensive. As an example, Eureka A4 can be very helpful in the case of a visually impaired person. It can really do wonders to help him to do his work but it is very expensive. Now when the government says incentive, they should meet 100 % of the cost of the gadget that is needed by a disabled person to do his job efficiently. Provisions for such assistance should be made.

Many persons have slight impairments and can be considered physically impaired only technically, but when it comes to giving jobs, the employers prefer to have the people with the minimum disability to fulfil the quota, while the seriously disabled people do not get the job. To my mind the greater the disability, the greater should be the attention paid to his recruitment. What does Mr. Abidi have to say to this?

**Javed Abidi:** I do not agree with you. Yes, there might be a tendency for employers who just want to meet the quota to do that. But at the same time one can not really enforce what you are suggesting. You have to leave it to the employers and the employable disabled. First of all, in the case of the private sector we would not like to advocate quota or reservation. We would rather speak the language of 'incentives, awareness and sensitivity'. So let a situation develop where employers are sensitised. People with disabilities should get jobs on account of their talent; on account of their training and not on account of their disability.

And regarding your first remark, in our memorandum to the President, your suggestion is already there Professor Chauhan. We have said that the nature of incentive should be clarified, and we have suggested giving tax exemptions on expenditure for provision of physical access, vocational aids, medical insurance, and other benefits. So, that concern has been looked into.

**Rukmini Krishnaswamy, Director, Spastics Society of Karnataka:** With increased competition in the job market even 'normal'

people find it difficult to get a job. How can disabled persons, particularly those from rural areas hope to get a job without a quota?

**Javed Abidi:** First of all in your question there is a bias which sort of hints that a disabled person is in a sense not 'normal'. See, when looking at employment, we are looking as to who these people are, where are they coming from, what kind of education and training do they possess. Disability should only be incidental. We are trying to build a friendly environment, an accessible environment. What is needed is the right kind of training, the right kind of education, where people are able to overcome their disability and in that sense an employer would look at them as he would at any prospective employee. I agree that in the present scenario it may sound vague. And as I said it is a sort of a dream. But it is possible and it is happening in other countries, so why not in ours? I cannot see any reason at all why it can not happen in India.

**Rukmini Krishnaswamy:** There seems to be a lack of linkage between the training that is imparted to the disabled, and the employment available. We did a brief study of the local special employment exchange, and the director informed us that many people want the disabled to be employed but when they do hire them they find that the disabled are inadequately trained for the jobs. I think there are a lot of aspects of the training that are questionable. As a catalyst agency, I hope you can do something about it.

**Javed Abidi:** Absolutely, I agree with what you have said. That is perhaps THE problem right now. It is not that job opportunities don't exist. Even in the last one year that we have spoken to employers, particularly from the private sector, the reaction that we have got is, "Yes we are willing and we would like to employ disabled people." So, to our mind, it is not that we do not have jobs or that people are not willing to employ the disabled. What is required right now is to have capable, educated and well-trained disabled people who can find employment on their merits.

**Salil Chaturvedi, Editor, India Feature Service, Delhi:** Coming to the role of NCPEDP, I am a little confused on what exactly the scope of the activities will be, especially when you talk of 'linkages'.

If you could talk about that, giving a specific example, it would make the role of NCPEDP clearer.

**Javed Abidi:** I will once again say that as far as NCPEDP is concerned, it would not be a placement agency. The role of NCPEDP is *not* to serve as an employment exchange or a placement agency. 'Linkages' means, to be in touch with the NGOs so that we are aware of their activities, the kind of training they are imparting, etc. We need to have a central place where all this information can be found. So that if, let us say, Mrs. Krishnaswamy in Bangalore, wants to know about some thing in some other part of India we would be able to tell her. If an industrial house, headquartered in Delhi, wants a certain category of people for their factory in the South, we will not give them names of disabled people who can be employed by them. But, we should be in a position to quickly tell them, "These are the kind of people you want, with this kind of training. Please contact the following NGOs in your area." So, the idea is to bring people together.

**Suhas Karnik, Hony. Joint Secretary, Blind Men's Association, Mumbai:** I would like to refer to Clause 33 of the Act, which says that the 3% reservation is in vacancies. It does not say 3% of the jobs. So if we have to wait for vacancies to be created, we will have to wait for years to come. Don't you think that this section is ambiguous and should be rectified?

**Javed Abidi:** Well, it is not as strong, or as good, as what you and I would like it to be, that much I will concede. But, the point is, you had a reservation of 3% in 1977. The placement, till now, has been only about 1%. So it is really the question of how we want to look at the issue. Clause 33 says that every appropriate government shall appoint in every establishment such percentage of vacancies not less than 3%.

**Question\*:** I think that we have now in your Centre an all India perspective. I am sure this could play a very important role. There is an opportunity to build a network through you. I am sure that

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\*Wherever it was not possible to identify the speaker and it was felt that the question was important, we have included the question as it is.

you need to plan a little more to go forward in this direction.

**Javed Abidi:** Thank you for your comment. That is what we want. We have just started, and are trying to move as quickly as we can. What we have already done is that we have had a series of successful discussions, two in the North and now in the South. As far as the NGO sector or the disability sector is concerned, we know most of you and are aware of what is happening there. But we would like to build on that—bring in the employers, bring in the corporate sector, bring in the government and the international agencies. See what they have to say about the matter. I hope by now the role of NCPEDP should be clear—that it would be an interface. It would be a catalyst. And let us hope we are able to succeed.

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## MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**S. Krishnan (Director General of Employment &  
Training, Ministry of Labour)**

**Presented by: P.K.Ray**

**(Additional Director of Employment Exchanges, DGE&T,  
Ministry of Labour)**

That persons with disabilities should be merely treated with sympathy is no more tenable in a progressive and technologically developing country like ours. What is required in the case of these persons is a sense of empathy coupled with concern and sincere effort. Even though services for the disabled have been existing for centuries, the concept of rehabilitation as it is understood today is of recent origin. Vocational rehabilitation or employment of the disabled took its roots just about thirty years ago in India when a few research projects were undertaken with the assistance of social and rehabilitation services of the U.S. Government.

A majority of these projects were hospital based, except for the Vocational Rehabilitation Centres for the Handicapped that were started in 1968 at Bombay and Hyderabad.

Disability received global attention when the United Nations declared

1981 as the International Year of the Disabled, and later, with the declaration of the Decade of the Disabled. While scientific and professional evaluation combined with vocational counselling is provided by the Ministry of Labour in Vocational Rehabilitation Centres and now extended to a variety of allied services, the enormity of the problem of the disabled renders even this holistic effort appear marginal. As per available estimates for the year 1991, there were around 16 million disabled in the country suffering from visual impairment, hearing impairment, locomotor disabilities and mental retardation. These persons have been vulnerable to discrimination and denial of opportunities that are available to non-disabled. The 'UN Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities', adopted at the 48th Session of the General Assembly in December 1993, prescribed certain long term strategies for the nations. It also assured an active role to the voluntary organisations. As a signatory to the document, the Government of India has enacted a legislation in this direction, viz., "The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights, and Full Participation) Act, 1995". This Act, in addition to existing provisions, deals with the creation of training and employment opportunities for the disabled.

### **Extent of the Problem**

Estimates of the disabled persons are available mainly from population census and the National Sample Surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). As per the estimates obtained through the NSSO in its 47th round (1991), the estimated population of the disabled was about 16 million in the country constituting about 1.9% of the population. Similar estimates for 1981 placed figures at 12 million, amounting to a simple average of 0.4 million disabled persons being added every year. The prevalence rates of physical disability was higher (2%) in rural areas than that of urban areas (1.6%). The distribution of handicapped persons according to the disability as observed during the survey carried out in 1981 and 1991 were as indicated in Table 1.

In a separate survey of children below the age of 14 years with

**Table 1: Distribution of Persons with Disabilities**

(In 000's)

Sr. No.	Type of disability	1981	1991
1.	Locomotor	5427 (39.68)	8939 (49.24)
2.	Visual impairment	3474 (25.4)	4005 (22.06)
3.	Hearing disability (5 years & above)	3019 (22.08)	3242 (17.86)
4.	Speech impairment (5 years & above)	1754 (12.83)	1966 (10.83)
5.	Total number of persons with disabilities	13674 (100%)	18152 (100%)
6.	Persons with multiple disabilities	1635	1998

Source:- NSS Report for 36th and 47th round.

(\*Figures in brackets denote the percentage of estimated number of cases with reference to the total)

delayed mental development, it was found that 29 out of 1,000 children in the urban areas and 30 out of 1,000 children in the rural areas had developmental delays associated with mental retardation.

### **Overall Educational Profile of the Disabled**

The NSSO estimates show that most of the disabled persons (70% in rural areas and 46% in the urban areas) were illiterate. Disabled persons with education up to primary level were 20% in rural areas and 30% in urban areas. Very few (3.5% in rural and 12.3% in urban areas) were educated above secondary school levels. The participation of the disabled in vocational courses was also very less—out of 1,000 persons of the age of five years and above, only about 12 completed vocational course as per the NSSO Survey, 1991.

## **Overall Employment and Unemployment Scenario at National Level**

Open unemployment at the outset of the Eighth Plan (April 1992) was estimated to be 17 million (of which 7 million were educated unemployed) or 5.3 per cent of the labour force of 319 million. Further, an estimated 6 million of the workforce were severely under-employed. Therefore, the backlog at the beginning of the Eighth Plan was taken as 23 million for the purpose of planning. The Eighth Plan envisaged an average growth of 2.6-2.8 per cent in employment which was expected to generate 8-9 million jobs in the first-half of the Plan and 9-10 million jobs during the second-half. The latest data available up to 1993-94 shows that employment grew at the rate of 2.23 per cent, per annum, falling short of anticipated growth in the first half of the Plan. According to the 50th round of the NSSO while open unemployment rates declined in 1993-94 as compared to 1987-88 from 3.77 to 2.56 per cent, the rate of underemployment at a little over 6 per cent remained more or less the same. The data also reveals that casualisation increased with a corresponding decline in self-employment both in rural and urban areas on the one hand and shrinkage of regular jobs in the organised sector of employment on the other. Casual wage employment increased from 31.2 per cent in 1987-88 to 33.5 per cent in 1993-94, while self-employment declined from 53.6 per cent to 51.9 per cent. Regular salaried employment also declined from 15.2 per cent to 14.7 per cent. The extent of unemployment of disabled persons is to be viewed in this background.

### **Employment Status of the Disabled**

When we analyse the distribution of disabled persons as per usual activity status revealed through the NSS of 1991, it is observed that out of the 16 million disabled as many as 11.4 million were unemployable. Table 2 indicates their breakup.

What is interesting to note is the number of disabled persons categorized under 'others' which includes old persons, children yet to go to school and those who are either not capable of doing any

**Table 2: Usual Activity Status of the Disabled (in million)**

Sr. No.	Status	Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Attending education	1.37	0.64	2.01
2.	Attending domestic work	1.68	0.55	2.23
3.	Beggars	0.09	0.03	0.12
4.	Others	5.59	1.43	7.02
5.	Total	8.73	2.65	11.38

**Table 3: Employment Status of the Disabled (in million)**

Sr. No.	Status	Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Self-Emp. Agriculture	1.65	0.07	1.72
2.	Self-Emp. Non-Agricultural	0.52	0.37	0.89
3.	Regular employee	0.25	0.28	0.53
4.	Casual labour	1.18	0.20	1.38
5.	Total	3.60	0.92	4.52

work or doing odd jobs.

The distribution of employment status of the disabled is given in Table 3.

Thus, the estimated number of persons with disabilities who were working constituted only 4.52 million (3.6 million in rural areas and about 0.92 million in urban areas.

The employment scenario of the disabled is to be viewed with reference to the quality of employment, in terms of: income received; work environment; introducing those out of labour force into the labour force; their reasonable settlement to make their living better and perspective planning for those attending education.

### **Infrastructure Available with DGE&T**

The Directorate General of Employment & Training, since its inception, has been continuously giving special attention towards vocational training and economic rehabilitation of the weaker sections especially the handicapped. In the industrial training institutions numbering about 3083, under the aegis of the National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT) and in the Apprenticeship Training Scheme (ATS), reservation of seats is provided for the handicapped to provide adequate training opportunities for them. The National Employment Service with a network of 914 employment exchanges attempts to provide them economic rehabilitation in the regular course along with other candidates. Recognising the special requirements of the handicapped, 23 special employment exchanges function exclusively to meet their demand. Again, since persons with disabilities require special care and a professional approach, 17 Vocational Rehabilitation Centres for handicapped were set up. The Vocational Rehabilitation Centres (VRC) evaluate the physical, mental and vocational capacities of the disabled, identify a suitable trade and help the disabled in procuring admission to training, job or self-employment. The VRCs also provide a variety of other services relating to creating community awareness, assisting NGOs in setting up new institutions and also organising camps in inaccessible areas.

The Ministry of Welfare is the nodal ministry of the Government

of India for the welfare of the disabled. All policy initiatives in the area of handicapped welfare are taken by it, keeping in mind the views of various Departments/Ministries of Government as well as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Most of the programmes are implemented through the NGOs and monitored through the State Governments. While the Welfare Ministry attempts to achieve their objectives (mostly educational and physical rehabilitation) through NGOs by providing them grants and establishment of national institutes for manpower development in the respective disabilities, the Ministry of Labour is concerned with vocational training and economic rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

**Table 4: Education and Skill Status of Those Registered at the Centre**

Disability	SSC+	>SSC	>8th Std.	Illiterate	Total	Skilled	%of Regd.
Ortho	155	44	60	23	282	56	19.9
HH	14	9	29	5	57	10	3.5
VH	25	2	8	5	40	15	37.5
CL	1	0	0	0	1	1	
MH	1	2	4	6	13	1	7.7
Total	196	57	101	39	393	82	20.8
%age	49.9	14.5	25.7	9.9	100		

\*HH-Hearing Handicapped, VH-Visually Handicapped; CL - Cured Leprosy; MH - Mentally Handicapped

@ Skilled: Anybody reporting experience or training in any vocation including typewriting and training in computers. Does not necessarily mean that they have a saleable skill acceptable to an employer.

## **Case Study Conducted in Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, Mumbai**

The study was conducted from the point of view of economic rehabilitation of persons with disability. The data was collected from three different agencies namely VRC, Mumbai; Employment Exchange of Purbani District; and an NGO located at Barhampur in district Jalgaon (all in the state of Maharashtra). The salient points observed are summarised below:

### **Analysis of Data of VRC, Mumbai**

- (a) All persons who approached VRC during the first half of 1996 were considered.
- (b) Type of disability, education level and employable skill was recorded.

Their distribution by type of disability, education and skill as observed were as indicated in Table-4

It would be seen that out of 393 persons that approached the VRC, majority of them were educated (i.e. 8th class pass), but only 82 of them had any employable skill. This includes those who had certificates

**Table 5: Education and Skill Status of Those Registered at the Camp**

Disability	SSC+	>SSC	>8th Std.	Illiterate	Total	Skilled	%age
Ortho	170	54	24	6	254	78	30.7
HH	4	4	10	0	18	3	16.6
VH	5	2	1	0	8	2	25.0
CL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	179	60	35	1	275	83	30.2
%age	65.1	21.8	12.7	0.4	100%		

**Table 6: Education and Skill Status of Those Registered at the camp organised by NGO**

Disability	SSC+	>SSC	>8th Std.	Illiterate	Total	Skilled	% of Regd.
Ortho	22	13	85	44	164	6	3.7
HH	1	0	1	2	4	1	25.0
VH	1	0	3	5	9	0	0
MH	0	0	0	34	34	0	0
Total	24	13	89	85	211	7	3.3
%age	11.4	6.2	42.1	40.3	100		

of training in typewriting, postgraduates and others who received vocational training. Therefore, only around 21 per cent of such persons with disability could be considered for immediate rehabilitation.

**(b) Camp Organised by Employment Exchange**

- (a) A special camp was organised for persons with disability.
- (b) All those registered in the camp were considered.
- (c) Type of disability, education level and employable skill possessed were obtained.

Their distribution by type of disability, education and skill were as given in Table 5.

In the case of those registered at the camp organised by an Employment Exchange, the results are skewed in favor of those who have passed SSC. A significantly higher percentage of 30.7 were skilled for accepting a job. However, more than one third of this were reported employed and attended the camp in the hope of finding better employment.

### (c) Camp Organised by NGO

The details observed for the persons with disability who reported in the camp organised by the NGO are given in Table 6.

It is interesting to note that in the Camp organised by a Voluntary Organisation, there is a high incidence of illiteracy and lack of employable skills. The following table reveals that 40.3 per cent of those registered were illiterate and 42.1 per cent had studied less than 8th standard. An insignificant 3.3 per cent of them had employable skills.

The data from different sources reveals the following:

- (a) Most people with disabilities reported were either illiterate or having educational qualification either SSC or below.
- (b) Very few amongst the illiterate, particularly from rural areas, had employable skills.
- (c) Since they do not have a reasonable education or employable skills, their economic rehabilitation is difficult.

From the point of view of economic rehabilitation, possession of an employable skill is necessary, and to develop this through the normal vocational training courses one has to devote a long time since in such training both theory and practice are taught. The immediate requirement of such persons is to give them only job-oriented training, which will help them to work in the place they live. With this background in mind, the VRC, Mumbai, organised a series of Community Based Vocational Training (CBVT) workshops at 15 different places in Maharashtra. The vocational training, organised in collaboration with a local organisation, concentrated on operations in which the community had potential to provide employment. The Centre has identified about 40 such operations that require a three month training to develop employable skills, and has also developed a suitable syllabi. Educational attainment of the disabled is not a constraint in developing employable skills. A follow-up study of those trained in these CBVT programmes revealed a very encouraging picture. A very high percentage of them were found earning wages during the follow up study conducted a year after the training was imparted. As many as 93 per cent of those trained were engaged in jobs for which they were trained.

## **Action Plan to Enhance the Employability of Disabled**

Currently, there is a limited scope for employment growth in the organised sector. The strategy so far had been one of identifying jobs that were generated in public sector, but now the emphasis should shift to employment generation in the private sector. Moreover, self-employment and entrepreneurship has to be inculcated among persons with disability. Considering that a large number of persons with disability live in the rural areas and the encouraging results observed through the case study, the concept of conducting community-based vocational training may have to be given a serious trial. This will ensure involvement of the NGOs, local Government and VRCs in one platform. The NGOs may provide space and other infrastructural facilities for conducting the training while the VRC may provide syllabus, tools and equipment, supervision and certification, etc. At present, out of the 17 VRCs, six are attached with skilled-training workshops where vocational training is also provided. We are in the process of extending skill-training workshops to all the Centres and are also trying to involve both the small scale and large scale industry in providing in-plant training to the disabled. At the same time, the normal vocational training system may continue to give special emphasis within the framework of the National Vocational Training System. Significant steps have been taken by identifying 18 occupations in which the hearing handicapped can be recruited under Apprenticeship Training. The orthopaedically handicapped are eligible for admission to ITIs and other technical training institutes. Modernisation of trades including the latest technology has to be introduced into the VRCs to enhance the employability of the disabled.

Sensitization of employers and public awareness need to be pursued vigorously. Job identification, standardisation of training programmes and upgradation of skills are required to meet the labour market demand. With the promulgation of Persons with Disabilities Act, the Government's seriousness to tackle the problems of the persons with disability is clear. With the active involvement of the NGOs,

the Government and the employers, the economic rehabilitation of the persons with disability, will be a less daunting task.

## **References**

1. Annual report of the Ministry of Welfare
2. Annual report of the Ministry of Labour
3. NSSO report for the 36th and 47th round survey.
4. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 and the rules framed thereof.

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## DISCUSSION—GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT

**(P.K.Ray, Additional Director of Employment Exchanges, DGE&T,  
Ministry of Labour, responds to questions from the audience)**

**Chapal Khasnabis, Executive Director, Mobility India:** I want to make two points. First, Mr. Ray said that the NGOs themselves do not employ the required quota of disabled persons. My own organisation does, and I know of many others who do that. The second is about the employment exchanges. I know you are not going to like it, but any educated person will not like to go there because of the level of corruption.

**P.K.Ray:** I do not deny that corruption is there. We are in a society that is corrupt. Let us say a person registers today in an employment exchange. He can hope to expect a call only after 12 years. The employment situation is such. I am telling you the facts. This is not the forum to discuss this issue because employment exchanges again are not purely placement agencies. If you see the Employment Exchange Act, only a notification to the employment exchange is compulsory. Taking persons from an employment exchange is not compulsory at all. The employer is free to hire a person from anywhere he likes. So, an employment exchange is a broker between the employer and the employee. Now whether marriage takes place or not is a different issue.

**Prof. R.S.Chauhan, National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun:** I do not want Vocational Rehabilitation

Centres to give employment. But at the same time, the physically disabled persons should be made employable. That means the right type of training should be given. I have visited a number of VRCs and even in this age when blind persons work as computer operators and computer programmers, VRCs impart training in cane-chair weaving. How do you propose to improve the training facilities.

**P.K.Ray:** Well, yes, we have not been able to change our programmes frequently enough to meet the demands of the labour market. Secondly, we are getting persons who are totally illiterate. Now, what kind of training can we give them? To a person who is purely illiterate, how will I give him computer training? For your information, in my own organisation, I have a blind class one officer working under me; a blind class II officer working under me. They are performing quite well.

**Dr. S.C.Handa, University of Roorkee:** I am from the NGO sector as well as the government sector. But the ground realities on the part of the government sector are to be seen. In a system, the output is always related to the input.

Therefore, my suggestion is that we should not really think of closing down VRCs, just because their efficiency is low. As a matter of fact, the time has come to get more and more governmental organisations involved into the system. We should be vocal enough, as watchdogs, to ask Government organisations to become more efficient. I have been to four VRCs. I do not expect the VRCs to train people when they get Rs.2,000 per month to train a carpenter. What do you get in Rs.2,000? Our duty as NGOs is to raise our voice very critically to the headquarters—to the Ministry of Labour, saying, "Why do you give Rs.2,000? Why not give Rs.10,000 so that people can be trained?" And then if they do not respond, we must nail them.

**Chapal Khasnabis** I have been a part of the committee that was set up to look into ways of improving government agencies. One of the impressions that I got after associating with our VRC in Bangalore is that it is not an open system. There are many people who are interested in assisting the VRC. But the VRC law does

not allow the superintendent to go out and accept this help. Now, one of my suggestions is that NCPEDP should look into the functioning of this setup. Secondly, I think it is high time that we bridged the gap between the NGOs and the government agencies. Why can we not be a little bit more proactive? You can convince the secretaries and concerned senior officers of the positive outcome of this.

**P.K.Ray:** This is not the forum to discuss these issues. The already existing National Co-ordination Committee should look into it.

**Rukmini Krishnaswamy, Director, Spastics Society of Karnataka:** We occasionally encounter problems with the labour unions. And I would like you to enlighten us as to how we can tackle the problem of the attitude of labour unions towards employing the disabled? I would like you to give us some clear-cut directions as to how the Ministry of Labour is trying to strengthen the existing system? When you are constituting a committee, we would like to know who the members of this committee are?

**P.K.Ray:** First point was regarding involvement of the labour unions. Your point is valid. We are trying to involve the labour unions, as well as employers, in all such matters. Regarding the second point, it is not the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour. If you see the Act, responsibilities of the different ministries have not been spelt out in it. Therefore, we will have to decide who will do what. We have outlined the areas where we can participate. A high powered committee has been constituted through the Act by the Ministry of Welfare.

**Prof. K.A.Chandrasekharan, President, FAITH India:** I have very recently received a complaint from some people in Bihar. The complaint was that the blind are not taught typewriting or telephone operating at the VRCs. The VRC staff says that the blind cannot do this. There are certain VRCs which are doing very well, and there are certain VRCs which are not doing well, because of the personnel involved in it. They do not have the right vision to assess the potential of the disabled. That is why they end up saying that the blind are not capable of typewriting or telephone operations. In our organisation we are teaching the same people telephone operating,

typewriting, shorthand, even using the fax and computers.

Another claim that you have made is that you are rehabilitating 8,000 people in a year. I do not know what is the meaning of rehabilitation? You may be giving vocational training to 8,000 people, but that is not rehabilitation. I do not think your claim is right. As I told you earlier, it is an exaggeration and manipulation of facts.

**P.K.Ray:** Your first point is to give facts. The facts that we have presented are not collected by us at all. They are collected by the National Sample Survey Organisation under the Ministry of Planning. If you disagree with the Ministry of Planning, I have nothing to say. You can go and talk to them.

Secondly, about the isolated case of the blind not being trained on computer, telephone, typewriter, etc. There can be such a situation in that one particular VRC where such facilities are not available. In such cases, they are bound to say that such training cannot be given.

(Heated arguments ensue following this remark)

**Jose, AIFO:** I would like to know how many women among the disabled are in employment?

**P.K.Ray:** Very good question. We are quite active on that front. There are blind women, orthopaedically disabled women, etc. If you want that information, we have the data. Write to us, we will send it to you.

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## **OVERVIEW OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION IN INDIA**

**(B.L.Sharma, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Welfare)**

Work is regarded as the basic human right of people with disabilities. The quota system, supported employment, sheltered and open employment as well as community-based rehabilitation are being practised in several parts of the world to make people with disabilities productive members of the society. However, economic and social problems have limited the employment opportunities of disabled people. Even if jobs are available, many disabled people are working below the level of their potential. It is being increasingly felt that the principle of "Participation and Equality" is a basic right of the disabled. The International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted in 1983, international standards, ILO Convention 159 and Recommendation 168, concerning vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons. The convention stresses that "the government policy should aim at ensuring that it is appropriate to all categories of disabled persons, and at promoting employment opportunities for disabled persons in the open labour market."

In India, the estimated number of persons with disabilities in the employment age-group as per the 1991 Sample Survey is as follows:

		(in lakhs)
Locomotor disability	43.87	
Visual disability	10.54	
Hearing disability	12.48	
Speech disability	10.47	
Any other physical disability	68.81	
Total	146.17	

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995 identified certain specific areas in the field of vocational training and employment for people with disabilities and various provisions have been incorporated in Chapter VI of the Act. The important identified areas are as follows:

- (a) 3% reservation for physically disabled persons in Government and Public Sector Undertaking jobs (Section 32 to 37).
- (b) Promoting better training and employment opportunities in addition to reservation in Government open employment (Sections 38, 39 and 47).
- (c) 3% reservation in all poverty alleviation programmes (Section 40).
- (d) Incentive schemes for promoting employment of people with disabilities, particularly in private employment (Section 41).
- (e) District Training and Employment Agency for people with disabilities (Sections 38 to 40).
- (f) Endeavour to equip the special schools for children with disabilities with vocational training facilities (Section 26 (d))
- (g) Schemes for preferential allotment of land for certain purposes at concessional rates (Section 43).
- (h) No establishment shall dispense with, or reduce in rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his service (Section 47(1)).
- (i) No promotion shall be denied to a person merely on the

ground of his disability (Section 47 (2)).

(j) The appropriate Governments and local authorities shall promote and sponsor research, *inter alia*, in the relevant areas (Section 48).

(k) The appropriate Governments, within the limits of their economic capacity and development, shall by notification frame a scheme for payment of an unemployment allowance (Section 68).

## **Inclusion of People with Disabilities in the Mainstream Vocational Training and Employment Facilities**

In the past, the dominant tendency was systematically to steer disabled persons towards parallel systems of vocational training and employment. Total adherence to such an approach is contrary to the rights of the individual, and inappropriate in the sense that it does not comprehensively take his or her abilities into account.

Other possibilities that have been recognised and adopted are:

### **Integrated Training**

In most countries, there are vocational training centres at all levels (national, regional and local). It, therefore, seems essential that disabled persons be given better access to these various centres as a matter of policy. Instructors should be taught how to provide appropriate training for people with disabilities so that their special needs can be met. Buildings should be made accessible to wheelchair users.

In India, the National Council of Vocational Training, an apex non-statutory body set up by the Ministry of Labour has formulated a policy of reserving 3 % of the seats for trainees with locomotor disability. This is done in all industrial training institutes in both engineering and non-engineering trades. However, the number of disabled actually enrolled and trained in these institutes is very small. It would be desirable to run special classes for disabled persons in ITIs to prepare them for admission.

### **Apprenticeship Training**

Many countries have apprenticeship systems in which young people obtain places as apprentices in businesses or, more often, with tradesmen

to learn the trade of their choice on the job. In this case, know-how is acquired directly in the chosen work environment. The work done by the apprentice is a means of paying for the training received.

Under the Apprenticeship Act, 1961, which aims at development of human resource through skill development based on the latest technology, 3% of vacancies are reserved for persons with disabilities. This reservation is only for the locomotor disabled. Efforts should be made for availing full use of this facility, and also open the doors for the visually, hearing and speech impaired people as well.

It would be desirable for people with all types of disabilities to have access to the apprenticeship system. If that involves extra work for those responsible for providing the training (special support may have to be provided), formulae could be devised to encourage them to take disabled people as apprentices (for example, assistance in the form of tools of the trade, raw materials, etc.)

### **Training for Self-employment**

Vocational training centres often focus training on technical skills rather than on management and marketing skills. To ensure that income-generating projects developed by trainees are viable, it would be desirable if the elements of management and marketing were also taught (from the management of a small shop or workshop to the basics of managing associations and enterprises).

DGE&T, under the Ministry of Labour, runs 17 Vocational Rehabilitation Centres throughout the country for different categories of disabilities. The VRCs have arrangements for assessment of residual capacity, training, evaluation and placement of persons with disabilities. There is a need to expand the network of VRCs in the country.

In various poverty alleviation programmes suitable reservation has been made for people with disabilities. The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment has reserved 3% seats in the Training of Youth Self-Employment scheme for people with disabilities. These concessions should be fully utilised, and should be extended to other schemes as well.

### **Loans for Income Generating Activities**

Disabled people should also have better access to savings and loan

systems and to sources of financing for specific income-generating projects. At present, it is often difficult for disabled people to obtain loans from a bank because they are too often regarded as being incapable of carrying on an income-generating activity. Thus, most loans to disabled persons are made by private organisation (NGOs or local associations) which find themselves obliged to develop parallel loan systems for disabled people.

In January 1997, the Ministry of Welfare set up the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) as a non-profit company. The paid up share capital of the corporation is Rs. 200 crores and the authorized capital is Rs. 400 crores. The main objective of NHFDC is to promote and support entrepreneurial and self-employment ventures by people with disabilities. State Governments should take immediate steps to identify the channelising agencies so as to promote and support entrepreneurial and self-employment ventures by people with disabilities and to ensure that maximum number of people with disabilities get the full advantage of this new initiative.

### **Vocational Education**

It would be important to establish links with the education sector to facilitate transition from school to work (information for secondary school pupils on possible careers, on work opportunities, etc.)

### **Quota System**

3% reservation (1% each for locomotor, visual and hearing disabled) has been provided in identified posts in all government and public sector offices in India. Quota system is being practised in other parts of the world also. However, difficulty is being faced in actually filling up the quota reserved for people with disabilities. Special recruitment drives will have to be launched by various Ministries in order to fill up this quota. Efforts will also have to be made for the proper pre-service training for people with disabilities so as to make them eligible for these jobs.

### **Sheltered Employment**

It is perhaps in the field of sheltered employment that the greatest

possibility still exists for the employment of disabled persons particularly in developing countries. The concept of sheltered employment was originally based on the need to provide occupational activities for severely disabled people who could not compete on equal terms with other workers in the open labour market. Such sheltered workshops often required heavy subsidies from the public funds to meet costs of maintenance and operational losses. However, this old concept of providing heavily subsidised work for specific groups of disabled people is gradually being replaced by 'production workshop' schemes. The essential difference between production workshops and traditional sheltered workshops is that the emphasis is placed on the production of saleable articles of much wider variety, and operations are carried out on commercial lines.

The establishment of production workshops in a small-scale industrial setting would create excellent employment opportunities for severely disabled persons.

### **Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)**

In recent years, it has been recognised in many countries that vocational rehabilitation and employment services for the disabled should be developed with the fullest possible community participation, in particular with that of the representatives of employers, workers and disabled persons' organisations. Community participation in vocational rehabilitation services for disabled persons should be facilitated by carefully planned public information measures.

Indonesia has, for example, developed a community based approach for the training and employment of disabled persons, especially in rural areas. Since the great majority of Indonesians (over 80%) live in rural areas, it might be surmised that an approximately similar proportion of the disabled population also lives in rural communities. The main factors preventing disabled villagers from obtaining training services are:

- i) the fact that almost all of the training institutions are located in urban cities;
- ii) the training system and methods used in the urban based training institutions are not usually suited to the conditions,

requirements and life style of rural community; and

- iii) the general lack of educational facilities and high degree of illiteracy in rural communities.

## Self-employment

For some disabled persons who live in an area where open and/or sheltered employment opportunities are limited, or for those who have difficulties in travelling to a workplace, self-employment may be the only practical option.

In economic terms, self-employment may be the most cost-effective way of creating jobs. The capital requirements are usually very small. Perhaps, the commonest form of self-employment is the market vendor whose capital may be no more than a basket or a sheet of plastic on which to display whatever is sold. Such enterprises are often performed on roadsides or open ground without using any costly infrastructure.

Self-employment is not necessarily limited to an individual activity undertaken by one person. There are many examples of successful co-operatives or group business enterprises where a number of disabled persons have come together by pooling their resources and skills to start a business. This form of self-employment has many advantages:

- i) People can share the numerous responsibilities of business;
- ii) They can take advantage of the economies of scale in purchasing raw materials and operations that arise from the larger scale of their business; and
- iii) They can also benefit from the mutual support and encouragement of their fellow members rather than having to labour alone.

Disabled people, like other marginalised groups, are likely to be able to work together more effectively because they share a common problem and feel that they must stick together in order to show the rest of the world that they can succeed.

A recent ILO survey indicated certain problems experienced by the self-employed disabled entrepreneurs. Shortage of capital was the most commonly mentioned problem by the self-employed disabled, as might be expected in any survey of this type. The second most

common problem was a lack of customers. When they were asked who they sold their products to, their answers were: directly to the general public; to other disabled people; to other businesses; to institutions; and lastly to foreign customers. Other problems reported included inadequate locations, poor quality or design of their products, lack of business skills and management training, etc.

## **Conclusion**

We must, however, realise that despite all these programmes and the legislation, administration, technical assistance and funds devoted to them, there still remain, in every country of the world, large numbers of people with disabilities who have not yet found working opportunities that meet their basic social and economic needs.

We will not solve the problem of employment for disabled people in an acceptable fashion unless we find ways that are socially and economically viable. The methods we have used until now have given some good results, but they have not opened the way for the multitudes that remain unemployed or under-employed. We may anticipate that the number of disabled people needing jobs will increase in the future, that there will be greater competition for available work, and that it will become more and more difficult for the society to subsidise either special employment projects or disability pensions.

It would be a mistake to assume that there is a simple solution to these problems. While employer attitudes are without doubt an important factor in many cases, and there is much room for improvement in this area, other factors also affect the disabled. Among the problems frequently observed are—insufficient or inappropriate education and training; transportation problems in reaching the place of work; demands or constraints imposed by family members; unrealistic job aspirations; social and cultural problems; and personality complications. In short, people with disabilities are liable to face all the problems that affect everyone else.

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## DISCUSSION—VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION IN INDIA

(B. L. Sharma, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Welfare,  
responds to questions from the audience)

**Chapal Khasnabis, Executive Director, Mobility India:** Could you tell us, why, in a country of 960 million, the Ministry of Welfare could not find a single person suitable for the post of the Disabilities Chief Commissioner for two years?

When we campaigned for an increase in the budget allocation for the disability division of the Ministry of Welfare, we were told, “Ensure that the Ministry of Welfare spends the money—that should also be your task.” So, I ask you, two-third of the year is over, have we spent two-third of the money?

**B.L.Sharma:** I think I did mention the importance that the Government attaches to the role being played by the NGOs. We are looking forward to increasing the contributions to them. Coming to the budget, let me share with you that when the budget of the Ministry was increased for the Ninth Five-Year Plan, they only indicated it tentatively. They are aware that this sector needs more and more money. Having said that, let me also tell you that while we support NGOs we are equally concerned that we support the right NGOs. And that is an area of concern. We get disappointing, disturbing reports from the field saying that so and so NGO took the money and now on the field nothing is traceable. When you talk of 1,500 or 1,700 NGOs, we also have to take into account that one bad example which will kill ten good workers. We are dealing with

public funds, so one has to be careful. But having said that, it will be our endeavour to see that good NGOs will be supported and encouraged.

Talking of the Disabilities Chief Commissioner, there is a system according to which the selection is made. The Chief Commissioner is being appointed for the first time, and I believe that some panel has been set up before I took charge in the Ministry. It is under consideration in the government. Yes, time has been taken but I am sure that soon we will have somebody in place.

**Dr.S.C.Handa, University of Roorkee:** Sir, my comment is on the quality of services that finally reach the disabled in this country. As you rightly said, we are spending a lot of money on this sector. I think that without quality resources a difficult job is even more difficult to perform. So my request to you is when you do the planning next time, for example the training programmes, you should think of giving a very handsome sum during the training period so that you attract good talent which ultimately delivers quality service to the disabled.

**B.L.Sharma:** A good point. I can only accept your proposition that while framing schemes, we must have adequate compensation available for the people who are teaching or getting trained so that they are enthused enough to continue in this sector.

**Question\*:** I want to know why the Government cannot monitor the reservations for the disabled as stringently as the reservations for the SC/ST?

**B.L.Sharma:** This is exactly what we have done in the meeting held last month. We found, firstly, a lack of awareness, despite the fact that the Act has been in position for quite sometime. We have a roster system for SC/ST that is in operation for a couple of years now. We are trying to do the same thing for the disability system also. Each department in the government would be expected to maintain a roster, and also specify the kind of disabled persons employed. We are just trying to put this into place so that this benefit which

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\*Wherever it was not possible to identify the speaker and it was felt that the question was important, we have included the question as it is.

is available to the disabled is given to them earlier rather than later. But I would expect this to be in place by early next year.

**Amita Joseph, British DFID, New Delhi:** I do not know if you have answered Mr. Chapal's question. Why has there been no Chief Commissioner in the last two years? What is the percentage of money spent for this year? I do not think I heard an answer to that. We always say that there are good and bad NGOs, but there are good and bad Ministries, and good and bad officers too.

**B.L.Sharma:** I said that it has taken time and soon we are likely to have someone in place. If you want me to say, "by January or February 1998", I cannot do that. It could be by the time I go back to Delhi or it could be by the time we have the next symposium. Because it is not for me to decide. Since we have been chasing it, we know that we are pressing for it. Secondly, the percentage of the expenditure. We have spent about 48 % of the year's expenditure. Yes, it may not be as much as the number of months, which have gone by. But it is 27 % higher than the last year. For the last two months, I have been having meetings for every 15 days to see that the money is utilised. I fully agree with you about the good and bad. We are all part and parcel of society. But I said that everybody picks on the bad examples.

**Malati Gopal, George Washington University:** I have noticed that a lot of collaborated efforts have been indicated between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Welfare. However, in your opening comment you said that most people with disabilities are working below their potential. In order to bring them up to their full potential, have any incentives or collaborated efforts been indicated with the Ministry of Education?

**B.L.Sharma:** What I meant was, that somebody is recruited only because there is a reservation. But the person is not given the work that he is capable of performing. For instance, somebody is taken for typing because there is a reservation, but she will be kept in a post where there is the least amount of typing work. Given the opportunity, he or she can perform as efficiently as anyone else. What we have done is that in all our presentations and interactions with the Ministries, we have been saying that do not only give them

the opportunities of employment—also use them according to their potentials. It has to be a mental attitude rather than anything else. It will take time.

**Dr. E.M.Johnson, Director, Vocational Rehabilitation Training Centre for the Blind, Ludhiana:** The Vocational Rehabilitation Centres are under the Ministry of Labour whereas the District Rehabilitation Centres are under the Ministry of Welfare. And many national institutes for the orthopaedically, visually and mentally handicapped, all come under the Ministry of Welfare. A disabled person ends up getting confused. Why not have the Ministry of Welfare completely handle the responsibility of the disabled?

**B.L.Sharma:** Your question poses a difficulty. That all the activities should be under one umbrella, either with the Ministry of Welfare or Ministry of Labour is difficult. Because, none of the Ministries will want to give up the work allocated to them. But we try and group all assistance together. And at the moment the exercise is to see that we try and group them together at one window where one or two people deal with one kind of issue.

**Bala Mani, Association for Mentally Handicapped, Bangalore:** We are heavily dependent on the grant that comes from New Delhi. Most often, the grants have to be routed through the State Government. We keep waiting for a year, sometimes more. Even when the grants have been released the paper work at the State Government level is incomplete. Now it is not the fault of the Centre. But my request is, can some kind of direct communication be established between the Central Government and the organisation being funded?

**B.L.Sharma:** When you are suggesting that a direct channel be established with the NGOs, does it mean that the grants should be directly released to them or do you mean that they continue to be released as they are now, but the communication must also be sent so that you can chase it ? Let me also share with you that we in the Government of India have no field organisation to oversee, supervise, or monitor all the work for which the money is given. The State Government is, therefore, an essential party because they are in a position to have the field inspection, and give us a field

report which is required in any utilisation of public funds. Till we have a better alternative, I fully endorse that time is taken. We are also concerned that this should be cut down to the bare minimum. But we have no field agencies to inspect. Therefore, we have to depend on the State Government.

**Rukmini Krishnaswamy, Director, Spastics Society of Karnataka:** Sir, we have been talking about incentives. I think that is the best way to enhance positive behavior. Incentives for having certain percentage of individuals employed, so on and so forth. But what is lacking is a penalty clause. It may sound a little odd when I say this. This should not only be applicable to the employers but also to the vocational training institutions and other educational institutes that are training the disabled. Most of you know that in the U.S. they have a penalty clause which says that your grant can be taken away, your licence can be taken away, if you don't comply with the provisions. We do not have any thing like that here and I think the Government should consider introducing a penalty clause.

**B.L.Sharma:** I did not want to mention that, because the first reaction will be that the Government can only talk of penalties, controls and constrictions. I, very mildly, mentioned about default on the part of the NGOs, and you must have seen the reaction. I can only agree with you.

**Question\*:** This is with regard to the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation. You have mentioned that two States have responded to your call for channelising loans. Though we have been motivating many disabled people to come forward for entrepreneurship, the problem lies in making a feasibility report. It is a highly costly affair. So, we NGOs can facilitate this but the cost factor is a problem. What can NHFDC do about it?

**B.L.Sharma:** Yes, I agree that the cost of that should also be taken care of. I will have to go through the guidelines. In case it is not provided for we will take it into consideration.

**Chapal Khasnabis:** My question is when you form a committee of 33 people to decide the fate of 60 million disabled people, you have the composition of 28 Government officials, and 5 NGOs. I

was specifically laid down that the 5 representatives should either be people with disabilities or NGOs who work for people with disabilities. And now out of the 33, we find only one person with disability in the whole committee! Why can't we nominate 5 NGOs instead of you choosing the 5 who will always say, 'Yes sir, Yes sir'? Then how can you say NGOs and other sectors should work together, when the core committee itself is not balanced?

**B.L.Sharma:** So, you are trying to say that out of 5 NGOs, 4 are not NGOs dealing with the sector? I will have to take this point and see before I respond.

**I.K.Amitha, Senior Vice-President (Business Development) Titan Industries Limited:** What does the government feel about the role of NCPEDP?

**B.L.Sharma:** I will accept my complete ignorance about the role of this organisation. And if you are finished with all the questions, I would very frankly admit before all of you that my aim to come here was not to deliver a lecture or a talk to you because I knew each person present here will be more knowledgeable than I can claim to be. I am only 62 days old in this sector. I came here precisely to learn from you, rather than tell you anything.

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# PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: THE TITAN STORY

**Vikram Rajaram**

**(Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Titan Industries)**

## **Introduction**

This article seeks to document the approach made by our company, Titan Industries Limited, in promoting employment opportunities for the disabled. The article does not claim to be universal in its applicability, though it is hoped that it will provide some pointers to potential employers of the disabled.

Titan Industries Limited, is a joint venture between the House of Tata and the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation. Titan commenced commercial operations in the year 1987 and is today one of the world's largest integrated manufacturers of quartz analog watches. Titan has also emerged as a major player in the ornamental clocks and branded jewellery markets.

Titan employs several disabled persons in its factories in Hosur, an industrial township located in the Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu.

This article addresses issues such as:

- Why we chose to employ the disabled;
- the approach we adopted; and

- the counsel we would wish to offer to other potential employers of the disabled.

## **Why Did We Choose to Employ the Disabled?**

Quite simply, out of a desire to help. Support to the disadvantaged has always been an integral part of the Tata practice and Titan, in line with this practice, remains committed towards its social responsibilities. Significant amongst its various contributions, has been the employment of the disabled persons.

At our factory in Hosur, we employ 169 disabled employees out of a blue-collar workforce of 3,235, which amounts to 5.22%. This figure comprises the movement impaired, the hearing impaired and the visually impaired.

## **The Nature of the Watch Industry**

Employment of the disabled in large numbers gains significance in view of the nature of this industry. It is a high precision electronic industry wherein the manufacturer of the watch components and its final assembly involve components which are minute, delicate and of high value. But experiences within the international and Indian watch industry had shown us the feasibility of employing disabled people.

The industry offered the following, which facilitated the employment of the disabled:

- Tasks are repetitive. Thus, investments made on training can be recovered over a period of time.
- Work can be planned in a manner where it travels to the employee, thus limiting the need for physical movement.
- Components are light in weight.
- Manufacturing activities are discrete in nature.

## **We also had the following to think about:**

- The need for good hand-eye co-ordination, since the assembly of watches is done manually.
- Components which were small, delicate and high in value.

The watch industry is not unique in this regard as, in a generic manner, the electronics industry has similar considerations and attributes.

## What Was Our Approach?

We observed the classical model followed by any company when satisfying manpower needs. The steps followed were:

- The identification of tasks.
- The classification of tasks.
- The definition of appropriate recruitment processes.

There were some departures made to facilitate the employment of the disabled, which will be mentioned later.

### Identification of Tasks

We looked at all the tasks that needed to be performed and identified those tasks that involved:

- Low levels of physical risk; where risky operations were not involved.
- The need for physical movement was minimal and where, under normal circumstances, work comes to the employee at the workstation.
- Tasks with low verbal communication needs, since we wished to employ the hearing impaired. This also required that the employee could be trained in acquiring the requisite skills through a process of demonstration and the need for verbal communication was not vital.

We also wished to create a mindset within the country through the vehicle of the Manpower Requisition form. This form was made to include a declaration as to whether the task could be performed by a disabled person, and if not, what were the reasons?

### The Classification of Tasks

Once tasks capable of being performed by the disabled had been identified, they were categorised into those that could be performed by the movement impaired, the visually impaired or the hearing impaired.

This exercise, in turn, led to the identification of the following department which held out the promise of absorbing the disabled.

- Case polishing: Where the steel watch cases are polished.
- Watch assembly: Where the various minute components are assembled in the cases, producing the finished watch head.

- Strapping: Where appropriate leather or metal straps are fixed on to the finished watch heads, and
- Packing: Where the finished watches are packed in boxes and sent to dispatch for their destinations.

## Recruitment Processes

After manpower needs in these departments, as dictated by the needs of the business, were enumerated, potential sources of the manpower were identified. Further, appropriate selection procedures suitable for each type of disability were adopted.

The standard recruitment procedure for the watch industry practised worldwide was adopted by Titan. This included:

- A psychological test to measure the candidates aptitude for performing repeated tasks in a consistent manner.
- A written examination to test his/her general knowledge and analytical skills.
- A practical test to examine the candidate's hand eye co-ordination and manual dexterity.

There were some departures from the criteria normally applied. Where a candidate demonstrated the ability to perform a task, but fell short of the desired rate of output, some relaxation was permitted. This relaxation was permitted with a belief that the candidate will be able to achieve the required standards eventually, by performing the same task over a long period of time.

To curb aspirations which might not be satisfied at a later stage of the individual career, disability related limitations in career opportunities were conveyed to the individual as well as his/her family.

### Some of the sources tapped were:

- The Indian Evangelical Lutheran Church School for the Blind, Bargur, Dharmapuri District.
- The Indian Evangelical Lutheran Church Higher Secondary School for the Deaf, Ambur, Vellore District.
- The Church of South India school for the Deaf, Palayamkottai.
- The WORTH Trust, Katpadi, Vellore District.
- The Dharmapuri District Welfare Office for the Handicapped.

- The Don Bosco Orphanage, Yelagiri.
- The School for the Deaf and Dumb, Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh.

These particular institutions were identified since it was felt that they would be able to provide candidates of a demographic profile similar to that of the other employees, thus preserving the homogeneity of the work force.

In recent years, social workers from the above institutions have been playing an important role in the placement of disabled candidates by approaching potential employers. They have also been approaching neighbouring villages to identify disabled persons seeking employment.

Presently, the pattern of recruitment is as follows:

- 60% directly from schools.
- 30% through social workers.
- 10% who contact us in an independent manner.

### **The Selection Process**

The candidates were invited to the selection process and those from socially and economically disadvantaged sections of society were given preference.

Candidates with impaired vision were interviewed along with their parents to determine the extent to which they were independent of external assistance, since some degree of communal living would be required. During the interview, the nature of the job, the facilities being provided and career growth of the candidate were explained to their parents.

Candidates with impaired hearing were interviewed with the help of an interpreter. Such candidates were also examined for the degree of the hand and eye coordination.

Candidates with impaired movement had to undergo the standard recruitment process along with the others.

The average age of the hired candidate was between 18 to 24 years for production related tasks. Since the career growth opportunities were limited in housekeeping, older people were also hired for housekeeping related tasks.

### **Some Special Measures**

#### **We nurtured togetherness**

We housed the disabled with the others, which largely contributed

to their integration with the rest of the workforce.

### **We lent them an ear**

Since the early days, fortnightly meetings were conducted with the disabled to address issues that were of specific concern to them. However, such meetings indicated that their concerns were not specific to their disabled state and the issues largely related to family, domestic and property matters. We lent them an ear. As much as we could address the issues, we did. With the passage of time, the intensity and numbers of such issues diminished, largely due to the confidence that the disabled gained in themselves. While such meetings continue to be held, the need to schedule them as frequently has diminished over time.

### **We trained our supervisors**

The supervisors in units to which the disabled were attached were trained in the use of sign language since they served as the interface. This further facilitated the process of acquiring the requisite skills. One consideration in this regard was that a common sign language convention had to be adopted since it was found that the hearing impaired had been trained using two different sign language conventions.

### **Communication**

To facilitate the process of communication with the hearing impaired three temporary teachers from the IELC School for the Deaf were hired and then trained to be supervisors.

Well before the absorption of the disabled, the work force was advised of the company's plans. It was also conveyed that the employment of the disabled would not result in dilution of the company's selection standards since they had been subjected to the same selection procedures as their colleagues.

### **Related Issues**

A study of the learning curves of the disabled indicates, in comparative terms, a shallow slope in early periods, but compensated in later periods.

Our experience has indicated that the disabled are in fact less prone to distractions as compared to the non-disabled worker, who is prone to feel bored with repetitive work and seeks variety on job.

We see our role as having been catalysts in the process of change through acts of providing and, in a lighter vein, matchmaking.

When they joined Titan in the early 90's, the monthly stipend earned by most of the disabled employees was in the range of Rs. 800 to Rs. 1,000. But now, they earn in the range of Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 7,000 per month. Some disabled employees have even been able to finance the purchase of their own dwellings, in the company township of Mathigiri, near Hosur.

Presently, 96 of the 169 disabled employees in Titan are married. Sixteen of these comprise individuals who found a spouse within the company. Only 14 of the 96 were married before joining Titan.

## **What Counsel Would We Offer to Potential Employers?**

### **Start early and start young**

The introduction of the disabled at an early stage in the life of a company contributes to the acceptance of the disabled as valued equal members of the workforce, thus promoting a cohesive work environment.

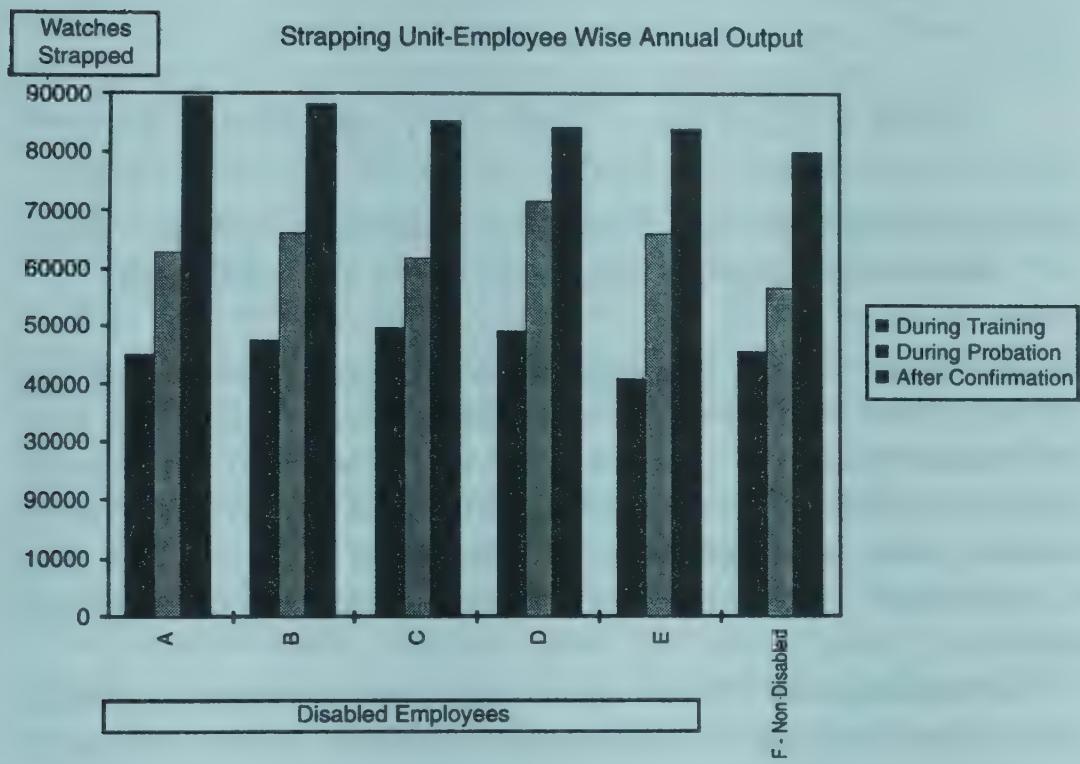
### **Not Philanthropy alone**

We endorse the stand that employing disabled persons is not philanthropy alone. If orchestrated properly, the needs of the business do not have to be compromised and productivity and the bottom line are not adversely affected.

### **Composition of disabled employees**

	Total	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Movement Impaired
Watches	141	107	29	5
Bracelets/Clocks	15	11	3	1
Jewellery	13	12	1	

## Annexure I : Employee-wise Annual Output



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## DISCUSSION—THE TITAN STORY

**(Vikram Rajaram, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Titan Industries, answers questions from the audience)**

**Malati Gopal, George Washington University:** You mentioned that the supervisors were the only individuals in these divisions who were non-disabled people. I was wondering why you would not consider one of the individuals with disability who have already been trained in these tasks, and who have acquired these skills, for the post of supervisors. Why should they be limited only to assembly line tasks?

**Vikram Rajaram:** When I spoke about the role of the supervisor, there was another word that I mentioned—interface. The watch industry is fashion related. There are new models that are introduced. It is far easier and more successful for us to do that if we can get people with whom we can communicate and explain the changes in the assembly process. Secondly, not all of the operations in our factories deal with minute components. There are other parts of the plant where you deal with 160 tonne presses. Therefore, there are areas in which we ourselves feel very reluctant about having people that might not have the right degree of reaction time, the right degree of skill to operate those machines. We are constantly looking for ways to increase the opportunity for the disabled.

**Rukmini Krishnaswamy, Spastics Society of Karnataka:** Have you employed any one with cerebral palsy? What about the learning disabled? Or a spastic?

**Vikram Rajaram:** No we have not. As I said, co-ordination is important in watchmaking. Therefore, you know, this kind of thing

we have to restrict.

**Question\*:** Is your model being replicated in any other industry? And do you use any devices that may facilitate persons with spasticity to work? And lastly, do you employ, in clerical and managerial positions, disabled people who have academic qualifications to do those jobs? Just because they are disabled does not mean that they cannot do management jobs.

**Vikram Rajaram:** Within the house of Tata, a tremendous amount of information is exchanged. I would not go so far as to say that we have walked down this path far greater than anybody else. We do like to speak and we do like to make it known in as many forums (in the house of Tata or otherwise) as to what we are doing. The very purpose of participating in these kind of symposia is that some of this will go out and we hope that in some manner or the other we would be able to spark other people into doing the same thing. We have so far not employed people in clerical tasks, Maybe this is one more place where we ought to look at. There are one or two considerations over here also. You know, most production jobs get done during the general shifts while clerical tasks get held over to the second and third shifts, which can go on till quite late. And therefore, we feel that in terms of transporting them, getting them back to their homes might provide some problems. But I must admit that it is not an insurmountable problem. Perhaps, we need to rethink in the next stage.

**Salil Chaturvedi, Editor, India Feature Service, New Delhi:** You mentioned that you are having problems with excise. And at the two-day symposium over here, we have been trying to explore ways of getting industry to employ disabled workers. There has been talk of an incentive/penalty system for the private sector, as in Japan. As a representative of the private sector at this symposium, what would you suggest to achieve our objective?

**Vikram Rajaram:** I am not sure that you can do it by fiat. I think the best way of doing it is by example—by demonstrating,

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\*Wherever it was not possible to identify the speaker and it was felt that the question was important, we have included the question as it is.



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and by constantly propagating the fact that, look you are not harming yourself in any manner by employing the disabled. There are areas where they perform just as well as anybody else.

Infact, recently we started a unit within the factory. You know, when we planned that unit, our biggest worry was not production; our biggest worry was not how you planned where to get the people; our biggest worry was revenue officials. The excise people coming to us and saying, "Hey, look, are you sure there is nothing irregular that is going on over here? You will have to mention RG1 part A register, part B register. You have to fill out 40 forms. You have to trace the goods as they go out. And trace the goods as they come in." For us that is a major deterrent. We are running a business. And if our managers feel that we are going to get subjected to excise raids and show cause notices, then one takes the soft option. One simply opts out of the process. And if people like you help even in terms of saying that, look, if this task is performed in a unit employing the disabled, either there are excise concessions or some kind of regulations which are waived, I think it would help tremendously.

**Question:** Sir, is there any separate representation in the union for the disabled?

**Vikram Rajaram:** At Titan each activity group has a representative. So the person who speaks for the strapping department (which employs the disabled) would be very very vocal when it came to their own needs. A very large part of this also depends on the culture you have created within the union. Some time ago the union president himself called me. I happened to be a member of our provident fund trustees. He called me and said, "There is a person in the jewellery section whose wife has had a hysterectomy and he needs 12,000 rupees in a hurry." I was pleased to see that it was at the end of the conversation that he told me that the person was deaf and dumb. These are all symptoms, indicators to you, of the manner in which integration is taking place within the company.

**Salil Chaturvedi:** Have you documented your experiences in any way for the rest of the industry to follow?

**Vikram Rajaram:** You see, we are now 10 years old. And I think that what is significant to remember is that this process of acceptance is over a period of time. Unless we want to replicate it for somebody else as a pedagogic exercise, then you can describe how to go about it, and what would be the steps? We are happy with the way things have turned out and I think it will continue to be a pleasant experience.

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# INITIATIVES BY NGOs TO PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**C.Antony Samy**

**(Executive Director, WORTH Trust, Katpadi)**

## **Introduction**

History is studded with people with disabilities who were outstanding kings, administrators, poets and musicians. But, in India, as in other cultures of the world, people with disabilities were looked at with pity. Looking after them was seen as an act of charity. This view is changing for the good.

Schools for blind and deaf children were established many decades ago, mostly in towns, where they were provided basic education and craftsmanship. With Independence, more schools were established. All of them, together, met the educational needs of only a small percentage of children; leaving the vast majority of the disabled children and their parents unaware of the opportunities for education. Though awareness has increased, the schools are still beyond the reach of most children.

## **Start of Vocational Training and Placement**

The schools realised that the education they provided was not leading to integration of the children as adults in the community. For this, vocational rehabilitation was essential. Some of them adapted their curriculum to include vocational training. But this training was in crafts such as weaving and did not really prepare the participants

to take full time employment. Realizing the poor impact, some schools established separate Vocational Training Centres that provided more intensive training.

Placement services, to act as a bridge between potential employers and disabled trainees were initiated. The schools are not so successful in placement because they do not have the resources, contacts with the public, and placement is handled by the staff as an additional duty. Still, with limited resources, they are doing a commendable job.

### **Production-cum-training Workshops**

During the '50s, a number of NGOs established sheltered and production workshops which provided vocational training and placement services. Noteworthy among these are the Fellowship of the Physically Handicapped, the National Association for the Blind, NASEOH, 3R Society—all in Bombay; the All India Federation of the Deaf in New Delhi; Association for the Physically Handicapped in Bangalore and WORTH Trust in Katpadi. There were many others. These institutes played a multiple role:

1. They demonstrated the productivity of persons with disabilities.
2. They built self-confidence amongst people with disabilities by enabling them to be employed productively.
3. They encouraged the trained workers to move to open industry.
4. They helped people with disabilities to earn a living.

### **Placement Services as an Activity**

The placement services operated by the workshops are more successful than the schools. The contacts they have with the industry and the realistic training they provide gives them an advantage. The trainees, with hands-on experience in production, gain self-confidence. Learning the discipline of industrial life, they are more prepared to move to industry and face challenges. The more enterprising of the placement services even do follow-up work, counselling placed persons and their employers about problems.

### **Placement Services Alone**

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of NGOs that provide placement services. A good example is the Rotary Club of Madras. In collaboration with MUKTI, (an NGO) the club organises

seminars and 'meets' between disabled people and potential employers. Over 350 persons have been placed in jobs during two years. The placement was done without any pre-training, although some of the persons placed had received vocational or professional training.

### **Difficulties Faced in Employment Promotion**

The barriers to employment range from the lack of opportunity due to low levels of economic development, negative attitudes of community (mainly employers), lack of infrastructural facilities such as housing, transport, insufficient preparation of disabled persons to take up employment, and their low self esteem.

### **Levels of Development**

In India, education is still beyond the reach of most children with disabilities. With a vast number of people living below the poverty-line, parents tend to neglect the disabled child. Thus, the disabled children grow up into illiterate adults. Living in a community where unemployment is rampant, they have much less opportunity to be employed.

### **Negative and Wrong Attitudes of the Community**

"When able-bodied qualified persons are readily available, why should we employ disabled persons?" is a question often asked by employers. This attitude emanates from a wrong belief that the disabled are inefficient. There is also a feeling amongst employers that disabled people are more demanding. So, while there are literally thousands of people with disabilities who qualify for jobs, the quota of 3% is not being filled.

This situation can be changed only by a well-planned and executed media campaign. The NGOs who are involved in this do not have sufficient resources to mount such a campaign.

### **Infrastructure Facilities**

Even when employers are willing to select disabled employees, there are many impediments. Industries and business houses are located in places where residential facilities do not exist or are expensive. So the employees have to reside in cheaper locations far away from the work centres. Transport is expensive and not 'disabled friendly.' Buses cannot be accessed by people with mobility problems and

even for others, is so crowded that it is almost impossible to use.

### **Client Preparation**

While most disabled persons are not educated, there are a large number who are highly educated and trained. Amongst the persons with visual handicaps, there are many graduates, postgraduates and even professionals. Most of them remain unemployed. The facilities for education and training for the hearing disabled are less than what is available for blind persons. Communication being a serious problem, even minor problems at work get magnified.

Orthopaedically disabled persons are easily integrated into schools and so have greater chances of receiving education and employment. Those with upper limb disabilities do not have much opportunity for vocational training, and hence, employment. While open employment is ideal for mentally handicapped persons, sheltered employment is being offered now. Those who benefit this way are a very small number. People with other disabilities face other problems: Leprosy carries with it a stigma that poses a great barrier in employment.

### **Employers' Attitude**

Employers might select uneducated and poorly skilled persons for jobs, but when it comes to the disabled they want them to be educated, trained and even screened more thoroughly. While industrialists provide on-the-job training to others, in the case of disabled they are reluctant.

Many employers see persons with disabilities as a liability rather than an asset. In many cases employment starts as an act of charity. When such placements are successful, the employers tend to employ other disabled persons; If they face difficulties, they form permanent negative opinions about employing disabled persons.

TI Cycles, a big company, pioneered the employment of blind persons in its assembly lines. They are very happy with the performance of these persons. Best & Crompton employed two persons affected by leprosy. One of them became a labour leader and made demands that could not be met. The firm stopped employing more disabled persons.

Many industries offer sub-contract work to workshops of disabled persons. Such work is mostly unskilled and labour-intensive. Chances are that the work is not compensated with fair payment. The workshops

accept these jobs mainly because it gives them an opportunity to train, earn some income, and in some cases they have no better alternative.

### **Worth Trust**

Worth was started in 1963, as a workshop employing different categories of disabled persons. It produces precision components for the automobile, electrical and pump industries. The fabrication centre makes steel furniture, wheelchairs, tricycles etc. After becoming self-supporting, it started a Vocational Training Centre.

The placement service was started in 1982. Along with the ex-trainees of Worth, outsiders are registered and placed. The people who benefit from it include illiterate persons and also those who are educated and trained. There are many success stories. Through this office 1082 persons have been placed in employment between 1981-1997, which includes 127 persons placed during 1996-97. Of the trainees who received vocational training, 23 are self-employed and many of them are successful entrepreneurs who are now employing others.

### **Titan and Worth—A Successful Cooperation**

Worth has good relations with Titan Industries of Hosur—an enlightened corporate with a social commitment. They employed fourteen ex-trainees of Worth who are producing components for watches. Titan Watches also recruited 90 disabled persons (with ortho- and hearing disabilities) with no vocational training. Titan Watches provided the specialised training and guaranteed them employment. Thus, the co-operation with one industry has led to the employment of 104 disabled persons.

### **Self-employment**

In our economy, where industrial employment is limited, self-employment is seen as a great opportunity. Convinced of this, many NGOs have embarked on assisting disabled persons to be self-employed. Believing that finance is the most required resource, and lack of it is the biggest impediment, they have attempted to provide funds. Most such ventures have failed. When funds are disbursed without proper study of the situation, preparation of client and follow-up, and distributed interest-free or as a grant, then they are likely to

be wasted. Banks, which some years ago generously distributed loans to "weaker sections" under political pressure, are yet to recover most of the loans and recover from the losses.

There are also good examples of successful self-employment ventures. The Christoffel Blinden Mission-SARO have implemented a scheme. Blind persons with entrepreneurship skills were chosen and trained in bicycle repair and weaving. Their area of work was surveyed for market potential. Some were assisted with funds to buy cycles. They rented the cycles and earned an income. Those who were trained in weaving were attached to master-weavers. After gaining experience, they started working on their own. A professional who visited them periodically, and assisted them with advice on managing their work and finances, monitored their progress. Thus, self-employment can be a success.

## **Conclusion**

Employment of persons with disabilities can be promoted by the following measures:

1. A co-operative effort between industries and placement organisations.
2. Provision of subsidised housing, close to employment sites.
3. Intensive and careful implementation of self-employment possibilities.
4. Financial assistance to NGOs to promote training in market-oriented jobs.
5. Government departments being made more responsive and prompt in assisting NGOs.
6. Facilitating intensive integrated education for children with disabilities.
7. Supply of assistive devices such as mobility aids, hearing aids and Braille equipment.
8. International collaboration to share information, technology and personnel training.
9. Establishing more special schools, vocational and professional training centres.
10. A national media campaign through TV/Radio and the print media.

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## DISCUSSION—INITIATIVE BY NGOs TO PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**(C.Antony Samy, Executive Director, WORTH Trust, responds to questions from the audience)**

**Lal Advani, Indian Association for Special Education and Rehabilitation, New Delhi:** When I was responsible for the industry, nothing was produced in this country. Then NIVH started, we persuaded them to charge one-third of the cost of the material. Well that is still relevant, but the whole economic situation has changed and I think we will have to reconsider it. The other point is, one institute is not able to meet the demand, so I think it will be a good idea if you and other organisations that produce equipment for the blind continue to do it.

**Antony Samy:** We have put up a very modern machine which makes industrial products. So it is not done on the side for charity purpose. This is not to undermine what NIVH has done for all these years. Certainly it is a good cause for collaboration between the Government and NGOs.

**Gonavati Fernandis:** We are very happy to receive the braillers now that they are at a lesser cost. The first batch has been released but we are still waiting for the next. Why is there a delay?

**Antony Samy:** Import of the brailler components are duty free to India. India has signed an agreement that all aids and appliances

for disabled people will not only be duty free but also with less documentation problems in clearance. Now, when we asked for import of 500 sets of components we opened a LC for import. It might interest you that each one costs around 400 dollars. We were pleasantly surprised that all 500 were sold. And now we have a pending order of 200 more. I think Mr. George is here from NAB, Bombay, he sent me a fax saying that he wants to come to Katpadi and collect one. We get desperate calls from people. Regarding our application for the second lot of import to the Finance Ministry, they said that the recommendation from the Ministry of Welfare regarding the import is valid only for the earlier lot. So I sent one more letter and met the joint secretary twice and she was very good. She said, "It is such a simple matter. You should not have come to Delhi. We will sort it out." That was three months and forty faxes ago. Finally, a recommendation letter was sent to us and it is still lying with the Ministry of Finance.

Many of the organisation including NAB and NIVH have imported these braillers in the last twenty years. Many of them are remaining for want of simple spares. So I asked government to allow us to import these spares. The first impediment was the Ministry of Finance, which said "If we allow you to import spares, you might assemble them." I said when you are allowing us to import whole sets why not the spares? I am glad that Mr. B L Sharma from the Ministry of Welfare is here. I have brought a letter with me.

**Lal Advani:** Would it not be worth-while for you to develop the components indigenously as you have an engineering background. Because that would save you the kind of situation you have described.

**Antony Samy:** Thank you Mr. Advani. In the present lot more than 10% of the components will be indigenous: All the plastic components, and all the twirled components will be made by us. In addition, packing cases, covers, and sundry items will be made by us. But my point is that in this age of open economy, when we are allowing luxury cars to be imported, there is no reason why we should not be allowed this progressive manufacture.

**Lal Advani:** I have seen the Baroda brailer. It seems to function as efficiently as the Perkins. And they assured me that every thing

is indigenous. If we can do that it will not only be cheaper it will be more convenient.

**Antony Samy:** Mr. Advani, we had sent 5 of our disabled boys to Boston for training. They have come back with their drawings and the expertise to assemble electrical braillers. So, in another six months, God willing, and Ministry of Welfare and Finance willing, we will put them in the market. For your information, an original Perkins brailler costs 650 dollars in Boston, and it costs about 100 dollars to transport it to India. So it costs about 750 dollars here. We sell them at 9,500 rupees each. And for those who are abroad they buy it at 500 dollars. So Perkins themselves are interested in shifting all their production facilities to Worth. And maybe in two years time we would fulfill what you are suggesting.

**Question:** What kind of training do you impart to disabled people?

**Antony Samy:** We do not have regular courses but we do teach on demand. For example, a group of disabled people in Nepal are importing our wheelchairs. Three disabled people will come to Katpadi; we will give them models, drawings and samples, and will train them to make wheelchairs. We are also in touch with an organisation in Japan that is interested in giving them equipment. The Japanese will donate them the equipment that does not cost much, while we will train them on it. So, they will be able to produce wheelchairs in their own country. In addition to the production they will also provide employment to at least 15 to 20 disabled persons. So this training is always given according to specific needs. There is enough demand for organisations interested in setting up production workshops and if they can only spare a month we will provide the training.

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## AN OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN INDIA

**Lal Advani**

**(President, Indian Association for Special Education and Rehabilitation)**

A cursory look at society's treatment of people with disabilities shows that disability was generally perceived as synonymous with complete helplessness. Disabled people were not assigned a useful role in society despite the fact that many exceptional disabled individuals had given unmistakable evidence of their intellectual prowess. These people were regarded as freaks rather than symbols of a reservoir of talent for the community.

Experiments in educating children with sensory and intellectual disabilities began during the French Revolution. But for centuries, education was viewed as personal enlightenment rather than as a preparation for coping with the problems of life. It took the horrors of the two world wars and the acute shortage of manpower in many countries, to appreciate the potential of people with disabilities. It was in 1944, when Britain was fighting a battle for survival, that the British Parliament passed the Disabled Persons {Employment} Act.

We imported our system of special education and rehabilitation from Europe largely in the last two decades of the previous century.

The system had two essential characteristics: the urge to bring the light of education to disabled people and to do so in segregated environments. This tradition persists till this day but with some significant modifications made in the second-half of the century.

It was in the late fifties that the Government of India started, with considerable hesitation, to provide an employment service for the disabled. In 1959 the first Special Employment Exchange for the Physically Handicapped was established at Bombay. In the past thirty-eight years only 23 such exchanges have been set up. This service has been supplemented by the Vocational Rehabilitation Centres of the Ministry of Labour, which were initiated in the early sixties. But here again, in three decades only 17 such centres have come in to being. About 55 Special cells in ordinary exchanges have also been established, but a report on their functioning said that they had not served a useful purpose. For three decades the Government of India have provided financial assistance to a number of voluntary organisations to establish their own placement services. The National Institutes have also set up some employment services.

The entire government machinery for assisting disabled persons in securing employment has not been able to assist more than about sixty thousand persons in obtaining employment in the last forty years despite the fact that all employment exchanges in the country have been instructed to offer assistance to disabled persons. The placement services of many voluntary organisations have shown better dynamism but they suffer from the disability of not being able to sponsor candidates for the public sector except through the agency of the National Employment Service. Thus, although no dependable figures are readily available, perhaps no more than 100,000 disabled individuals have secured employment either through the government machinery or through the placement services of voluntary organisations. This works out to giving employment to about two thousand disabled persons annually.

Although reservations made by the Central and State governments have tended to accelerate the placement of disabled persons in employment, we seem to have reached a point where it is incumbent

on us to review our strategy since employment in the government and public sector is steadily declining.

The NSSO survey puts the number of disabled persons at 15 to 16 million people. It is widely believed that the number of disabled persons requiring educational or employment assistance may be closer to 50 million. In this backdrop, the placement of 100,000 disabled persons in employment in a period of nearly forty years pales into insignificance.

It will not be out of place to look at the composition of those who have received employment assistance. More than eighty percent of these people are those with moderate locomotor disabilities. The sensory disabled have not received more than 15 % share of employment offered to the disabled in the past forty years or so. However, visually handicapped persons have received a much better deal than the hearing impaired, largely on account of their communication problems. The visually handicapped are now clamouring for higher jobs particularly in light of the Supreme Court decision entitling them to appear for the I.A.S. and other competitive examinations. But the worst sufferers have been the intellectually retarded, spastics, the autistic and other persons with disabilities, who often have associated maladaptive behaviour. Despite the admirable efforts made by the National institute for the Mentally Handicapped, and individuals like George Cornelius and others, the scenario for the open employment of persons having such disabilities continues to be rather grim.

Self-employment of disabled people is replete with many difficulties at a time when multinationals are entering the consumer market. We hope that the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation set up by the government will soon be operational, and may set the stage for a new trend in the employment of the disabled. But, at present the scenario does not seem to be encouraging. Unless the corporation also offers marketing and other entrepreneurial assistance, it is open to question whether it will be possible for the corporation to substantially accelerate the pace of self-employment among the disabled. A fresh look at the function of the corporation appears warranted.

We have been fighting shy of the expression "sheltered workshop". But is it possible for any one model to serve people with a large variety of disabilities and social and economic circumstances? The NSSO survey says that about 45% of the disabled population is severely disabled. But in the past fifty years we have taken steps only to serve the less severely disabled in spite of our declared policy to come to the aid of the weakest sections of the community. It is time for us to review our decisions in the light of our public commitments. We can ill afford to lose sight of about half of our severely disabled population at a time when the support provided by the joint family system is rapidly crumbling.

We have been talking of the empowerment of the disabled. Employment is the most powerful tool for empowerment. It is, therefore, necessary that we should turn our attention to the more severely disabled and not leave them at the mercy of the family.

Rough estimates indicate that disabled women have received hardly 5% of available employment. This is not consistent with our avowed policy of equal opportunities for disabled women. For many women in this country a sheltered workshop is not a suitable institution unless residential accommodation is provided. Therefore, it may be necessary to develop schemes for home workers. Since NGO's have been pioneers in the entire field of rehabilitation, with some assistance from the Central and State governments, they could perhaps initiate some experimental programmes for providing work to disabled women as well as to very severely disabled people in their own homes. A few scattered experiments have been made. But the model deserves a good try.

A bright spot on the horizon has been the emergence and fairly wide acceptance of the CBR model for over 70% of our disabled people living in rural areas. In the last thirty years or so, more than a hundred CBR or rural extension projects have been initiated in the country. Some fifty thousand people are covered by these projects. We hope that in the years to come a much larger number of disabled people will receive the benefits of CBR services. But a note of caution at this point may not be out of place. There has

been a tendency on the part of some enthusiasts to project this model as the only viable model. I think it is important to bear in mind the fact that in a country like ours with considerable diversity, no one model however admirable, could meet the needs of fifty million disabled people.

At the moment many CBR projects give a back seat to education. This may prove to be a serious obstacle to the upward social and economic mobility of disabled people. It is probably to introduce an element of assessment so that more gifted disabled individuals are provided better opportunities for their development, if necessary, away from the rural environment. Disabled people living in rural areas should not be deprived of the benefits of modern equipment and other modern services to the extent this is feasible.

In many rural programmes considerable stress has been laid on including disabled people in traditional employment available in the rural areas. It is perhaps also necessary to pay greater attention to discovering new areas of employment even in rural areas.

One of the major obstacles of the employment of the disabled has been the absence of a clear and comprehensive job identification based on well established principles of task analysis. It is imperative that a nation wide survey of jobs for persons with various disabilities and coming from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds is undertaken urgently. The results of such a survey may greatly assist agencies engaged in placing disabled persons in employment.

My endeavour has been to provide an overview of the current employment situation for the disabled in the country. This overview has clearly brought out the paucity of opportunities available and emphasised the need for adopting and developing a multi-model programme of employment. I have also emphasised the importance of taking a fresh look at the government machinery for the placement of disabled people in employment. Equally important is the need to shift emphasis from urban to rural employment.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise the imperative need for research designed to identify new opportunities as well as develop new technologies for promoting employment of the disabled. A holistic

view of the situation and comprehensive approach to this problem of gigantic proportions and immense human significance may help us to make a better impact on its solution in the coming decades.

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## DISCUSSION—EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DISABLED

**(Lal Advani, President, Indian Association for Special Education and Rehabilitation)**

**Prof. R S Chauhan, National Institute for Visually Handicapped, Dehradun:** My own thinking is that we must have sheltered workshops for different disabled groups. I am sure that if proper planning is done, these sheltered workshops can be run on a profitable basis. Since you have served for more than 40 years in the government, what mechanism do you suggest that job-identification for the disabled can be done in a sound, logical basis. Something has to be done to give them jobs in group 'A' and 'B'. The exercise that had been carried out in 1980 gave hardly 10 jobs for the blind!

**Lal Advani:** I am whole-heartedly in agreement with you. There is a lot of prejudice against sheltered workshops, but I am not sure whether it is necessary to set up separate workshops for each disability group. Because the work situation can be so adapted that a work is divided into components. There are certain components that a blind person can do, there are other components that a mentally retarded person can do and there are other components that a deaf person can do. An integrated approach might be more successful. China is supposed to have 45,000 factories manned by cross disability groups.

The problem in identification of proper jobs is that the teams

do not go to the spot. They sit in an ivory tower and decide what jobs a blind, or a deaf person can or cannot do. I had a meeting with the Department of Personnel and Training, and I told them very plainly that this ivory tower approach has to be given up. Go to the field, study, do a task analysis, find out the capabilities required for the task and then decide what jobs persons with particular disabilities can do.

Unless there is a sympathetic understanding of the potential of the disabled people, unless people realise that the disabled are equal citizens and have equal rights, laws are meaningless.

As far as group A and B jobs are concerned, the Supreme Court has already given a decision four years ago—Blind persons can not be prevented from the IAS and other competitive examinations. I was told by the Department of Personnel and Training that they are still in the process of identifying positions that could be held by disabled people. For example, they say an IAS officer is supposed to be in charge of the district and has to control law and order situations. They asked me if a blind person would be able to control a violent crowd? Obviously the answer is, it may be difficult. But then there are so many secretarial positions that a blind person can fit into. And the other problem is that though blind people have been able to pass the preliminary examinations for civil services no one has, as yet, passed the final examination. But I have no doubt that in the coming two or three years blind people will pass the finals. Then the Department of Personnel and Training will be obliged to identify secretarial positions where it is not a question of controlling law and order situations but the use of intellect to promote the country's development.

**Question\*:** Could you give some details of the Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation. To what extent will it be able to give financial assistance in the way of loans? What would be the rate of interest? And will it have outlets all over India?

**Lal Advani:** It will, for the time being, be located in Delhi.

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\*Wherever it was not possible to identify the speaker and it was felt that the question was important, we have included the question as it is.

Up to Rs. 100,000 will be disbursed without interest. Beyond that, to about 500,000 the rate of interest is 4%. The corporation will be appointing committees that will see the feasibility of the project. I believe it has started giving loans in Andhra Pradesh.

**Question:** You have been speaking about the educational component in CBR. I think we can explore the possibilities of National Open School because we have started a centre recently that is one of its pioneering centres and we find it very successful. You have been talking of task analysis. This work can be taken up by NCPEPD as they are thinking of networking with various government and non government agencies all over the country.

**Lal Advani:** I have been advocating all forms of education for disabled people. For example, in rural areas you have vast manpower—retired teachers, postmasters and revenue officers who have lots of time. Give them a little incentive and orientation and they can provide non-formal education to children with disability. And they can take their examination from the National Open School. I am also working with IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University). I have been requesting them to telecast life enrichment programmes.

You see a lot of problems with people with disability arise because of the ignorance of the parents or the wrong expectations of parents. If a mother could be convinced that her disabled boy could become an IAS officer, her treatment of him will be quite different. I believe we should popularise success stories. There are thousands of disabled people in this country who have very substantial, extraordinary achievements to their credit. I know of a disabled person in Delhi, an orthopaedically handicapped person, who is running a finance company and earning lots of money. If you can show such success stories to employers, then I think our effort of promoting the employment of the disabled will become easier.

I have also suggested to IGNOU to set up a separate school of special education. One thing I would like to say—NCPEPD could certainly take up this item but it will have to collaborate with research agencies. You see mere task analysis will not help you.

**Question:** Sir, you rightly said that education is the beginning

of empowerment. When we first read the Act we were delighted to know that the education scenario for the disabled would improve, but when we went to a law school to understand the law better, we were told that the people who drafted the act have been very clever. The disabled will have access to education but no rights.

**Lal Advani:** You are absolutely right. The original draft of this Act was made by me. But I do not accept responsibility for it because when the Law Ministry and other people chopped and changed it I myself could not recognise the draft. Today, there is very little in the Act. We have been saying that under the Act we can go to the Supreme Court. I very much doubt it because it has been so worded that, as you rightly said, it has not been made into a right.

The Disability Act has been so modified, that its teeth have been taken away. Therefore, in one sense the Disability Act is a mere policy document. For example, the chapter on education mentions that every child between three and eighteen years shall receive free education. There is no target given. It could happen in two centuries!

The government is going to bring forward a Constitutional amendment making primary education a fundamental right. But they also say, "No, no, this does not cover disabled children." If you see the compulsory primary education Act of many states, they have included disabled children. So, I have written to the government saying that the fundamental right applies to every child, including a disabled child. Unless that happens this right will never be established.

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# **LEGISLATION IN INDIA AND ITS EFFECT ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**Dr. Shalini Joshi**

**(Programme Officer, Disabled Persons' Welfare Unit, and  
Poonam Kwatra, Programme Assistant,  
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation)**

## **Introduction**

The business community in India has a long-standing tradition of philanthropy—supporting projects and organisations of benefit to the community. For the cause of persons with disabilities the need for such support cannot be ignored and has never been greater than it is today. However, there is growing awareness amongst companies to move beyond the traditional approach of philanthropy to an integrated approach that calls for more involvement of the corporate sector to make greater use of the full range of business skills and resources in tackling the challenges faced by disabled people. There is, therefore, a compelling case for business to make a sustained, strategic investment in education, employment and rehabilitation of the disabled and to raise the quality of their aspirations and achievements.

Believing in the important role the corporate sector can play towards achieving this objective, the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF), in association with ACTIONAID has set up the National Centre for

Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP). The aim of this Centre is to create conditions that would help in promoting employment opportunities for disabled people and to act as an interface between industry, NGOs, the Government, international agencies and disabled persons.

## **Legislation**

Germany has a quota of 6% for employment of the disabled in both government and private business. The Americans with Disabilities Act, 1992, sets a large number of standards to be achieved in working life. It prohibits employers of 15 or more persons from discriminating against persons with disability. In Germany and Japan, an employer who fails to fill his quota is expected to contribute to a compensation fund. This fund is in turn used in various ways to benefit people with disabilities in these countries. In China, the state laws make it binding on the government to force all institutions and economic organisations to employ disabled people in a ratio which is decided by local governing bodies, as they deem suitable in their case.

The Indian Parliament, with a view to promote the full participation and equality of people with disabilities, passed the 'Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Bill, 1995'. The purpose of the Bill is to fix responsibility on the Central and State Governments to provide services, create facilities, and give support to people with disabilities to enable them to have equal opportunities, and participate as productive and contributing citizens of this country, to the fullest of their abilities. This Act provides a framework, within which, specific demands can be made by the disabled people in order to ensure that the Government honours the promises made in this Act.

### **Some salient features of the Act are:**

- The Government shall identify posts, which can be reserved for persons with disabilities. These reservations shall not be less than 3% in all groups—A,B,C and D posts.
- 47 Special Employment Exchanges and 41 Special cells in General Employment Exchanges will be the nodal agencies for the purpose of employment.
- 3% reservation of seats for trainees with locomotor disabilities

- in all Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)
- 3% reservation of vacancies for physically disabled persons under the Apprenticeship Act, 1961.
- 17 Vocational Rehabilitation Centres throughout the country to provide vocational training to various categories of disabled persons.
- 3% reservation of benefits for physically disabled persons in various poverty alleviation programs such as the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP), Training of Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) and Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY).
- Financial support for entrepreneurial and self-employment ventures of people with disabilities through the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation.

The State has been entrusted with the responsibility to prevent disabilities, provide medical care, education, training, employment and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the State must create a barrier-free environment for them, remove any discrimination against them which prevents them from sharing the development benefits, counteract any abuse or exploitation, lay down strategies for equalisation of opportunities.

The Act stipulates that this shall be achieved through Co-ordination Committees at the central and state levels with Welfare Minister as the Chairperson. Officials of ministries and concerned departments, NGOs working with, and for the disabled people and people with disabilities shall be appointed as members to co-ordinate disability-related activities of the government, NGOs and others.

The Act also states that the governments shall, within their economic capacities, give incentives to employers in public and private sectors to ensure that 5 per cent of their workforce is composed of persons with disability. The government is still to define the nature of these incentives, which is unfortunate. It has been the experience of other countries that these incentives give immediate impetus to the corporate sector to include such activities in their business plans, and thus shift from mere passive philanthropy to active participation.

Legislation should provide a framework for the government to

act with speed in implementation of legal, progressive and economic activities. Unfortunately, even though The Persons with Disability Act came into force from February 7, 1996, the activities have still not gained momentum. The Central Co-ordination Committee stipulated in the Act is still to be functional and a Chief Commissioner is yet to be appointed. The State Governments have initiated the process of formulating the State Co-ordination Committees, but the pace is very slow. In most cases, where it has been constituted, it is not in keeping with the spirit and directions of the Act. Only after these bodies are in place can we hope for legislation to be implemented, in letter and spirit, to assist people with disabilities to attain their rights.

As a first step we required a legislation in place which we now have and now we require that the government be committed to its implementation so that proper direction is given to various sections of our society.

## **Employment**

According to the *Human Development Report, 1993* brought out by the UNDP, the disabled make up at least ten per cent of the world's population. They include all those who have experienced injury, trauma or disease that results in long-term physical or mental changes. The United Nations estimates that the Asian and Pacific region has by far the largest number, some 300 million, of the world's disabled persons. People with disabilities in the region constitute an important disadvantaged social group and a considerably neglected human resource base. The last census of the disabled in India conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) was in 1991. According to this census there are an estimated 16 million disabled people in India constituting about 1.9% of the population growing at an average rate of 0.4 million disabled people per year. These figures seem very conservative in the light of trends revealed by the UN organisations. In a country as large as India with as large a population, high incidence of disease, these figures seem unbelievable. Perhaps we need another census. Even so, employment statistics in India present a grim picture: there are an estimated seven million

people in need of jobs between the age groups of 15 and 59 years, and the placement figure is only three to four thousand every year. In most cases the problem is compounded by the fact that persons with disabilities, wherever employed, are either under-paid or under-employed.

### **Employment Opportunities for Disabled Persons**

“The term ‘disabled persons’ means an individual whose prospects of securing, retaining and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced as a result of a duly recognised physical or mental impairment”. This ILO definition of a disabled person has served as a model in the vocational rehabilitation legislation of many countries. It takes into account a disabled person’s prospects of advancing in employment and subsequently securing and retaining it.

The process of selective placement consists of matching the worker and his residual abilities with the physical and mental requirements of jobs. It is a positive approach, often based on the principle of placement laid down in the International Labour Vocational Rehabilitation (Disabled) Recommendation, 1955 (No.99) which says:

Disabled persons should be afforded an equal opportunity with the non-disabled to perform work for which they are qualified;

Disabled persons should have full opportunity to accept suitable work with employers of their own choice; and

Emphasis should be placed on the abilities and work capacities of disabled persons and not on their disabilities.

The impact of new technology on employment, in particular the dramatic replacement of the human operator through automated equipment, often results in reduced demands for labour. It may also call for greater all round skill and adaptability on the part of the operator, and vocational rehabilitation and training programmes must take this into account so that the disabled can compete for new job opportunities in a changing employment market.

It is true to say that automation is reducing or eliminating physical demands and safety hazards in many occupations, thus bringing more jobs within the range of physically disabled persons. On the other hand, this also implies that persons with disabilities need training

in new technology if they are to get these jobs. In this respect, employment opportunities for some categories of the disabled may be adversely affected, at least in the particular sectors where the changes have been introduced. For the mentally handicapped, while the acquisition of new skills or the ability to perform a complex task may be difficult to achieve, the necessary adjustment to the psycho-social demands of the change itself may well be beyond their capacity. There is no evidence to show, however, that the physically disabled are less adaptable than others in the acquisition of new skills for more complex work.

There is one aspect of new technology, however, which has brought incalculable benefits for disabled persons: this relates to the application of new technology in the production of assistive devices of all kinds.

These scientific and technical achievements have indeed widened the social and vocational horizons for many disabled persons.

### **Special Avenues of Employment for People With Severe Disability**

Self-employment may frequently be found to be the best form of employment for disabled persons who live in areas where open employment opportunities are limited, or for those who have difficulty in travelling to work. For such schemes, sponsored by Government or NGOs, a follow-up service is essential in order to check on progress and help resolve any initial difficulties which may arise in running the business.

**Sheltered workshops:** These were intended to provide permanent work for the severely disabled who were unlikely to be able to work in competitive industry. In many instances, however, sheltered workshops tended to emphasise on social rather than economic issues, providing a special kind of relief work and depending on public charity and sympathy for the sale of their products and even their very existence. This also resulted in segregation rather than integration of the disabled.

**Home work:** This is another possible employment outlet for the seriously disabled or those disabled who live in areas from which they cannot travel daily for work. For such schemes, unless there is a regular and frequent follow-up service, there is a danger that

this form of employment will not offer a means of livelihood to disabled persons.

**Co-operatives:** Co-operative enterprises of, or for, the disabled can provide useful and worthwhile resettlement opportunities for the disabled. Ideally, efforts should be made to integrate the disabled in the general co-operative scheme structure, but where this is not practicable, the possibilities of setting up special co-operatives of or for the disabled should be examined.

**New Technology:** Advances in technology, the use of sophisticated tools and equipment, the adoption of automated production processes and the introduction of computerised systems for service and production work have had far-reaching effects on vocational training methodology and job opportunities for disabled as for all other workers.

### **Obstacles in the Way of Placing the Disabled**

The extent to which a wide range of employment opportunities is available for the disabled in a particular country depends on the presence and/or acceptance of the following obstacles.

**Community attitudes:** If a community accepts the idea that the disabled are non-productive, to be hidden away in family or institutional care, that community is unlikely to be readily responsive to proposals for the integration of the disabled into active working life.

**Economic obstacles:** If there is heavy unemployment and under-employment among the able bodied, placement of the disabled people may become extremely difficult. Such a decision, apart from discriminating against the disabled and ignoring their human rights to a fair share of development opportunities, also overlooks the fact that disabled workers can be as efficient as the non-disabled.

**Employer attitude:** Resistance on the part of employers to employ disabled persons could be due to: unawareness of the working potential of disabled persons; the existence of an adequate supply of able bodied; restrictive methods of recruitment; the fear of extra expenses because of low production and absenteeism; and the fear of greater liability to accidents, and consequent claims on the employer.

**The attitudes of the disabled and their families:** In any community where the disabled have been over-protected by their families or

have been given a negative role by the community, it may be difficult to convince them of the benefits of vocational rehabilitation in general and selective placement in particular.

In the case of persons who have become disabled as a result of industrial traffic or some accident, there may well be some reluctance on their part to consider returning to work for fear that by doing so it may adversely affect claims for compensation or injury benefits.

Physical obstacles: Architectural and other barriers still present a major obstacle to the full integration of disabled persons into active socio-economic life. This, in itself, is a topic of fundamental importance and merits more attention than can be given here.

### **Overcoming Obstacles**

How do we overcome these obstacles? A few ideas that come to mind are:

- Extensive use of all available media to support efforts that will lead to an increased visibility of disabled persons in our daily life. Media can also generate awareness that through selective placement, a large proportion of the disabled need no longer be dependent on family, community or state resources, but can be helped to become self-respecting and productive citizens.
- Use of resources in schools to sensitise children towards issues of disabled people and integration of relevant components in the curricula to increase their acceptability.
- Participation of the voluntary sector in taking up the challenge of vocational training, community based rehabilitation, advocacy, information dissemination, etc.
- Trade Unions have been a potent force in bringing about many changes in the mind-set of people and how society views labour. Their participation in rehabilitation of disabled workers would be invaluable.
- A strong, influential, vociferous professional lobby is essential to obtain a reasonable share of resources at the disposal of the government in competition with other deserving disadvantaged groups.

Such campaigns stressing the abilities of disabled workers, can

be made more effective by quoting factual results of research into employment performances of disabled workers.

## **Role of Corporate Sector**

It is absolutely essential for the corporate sector to be convinced that there is a positive economic value in employing disabled people, that they can be productive and can contribute to the economy of their organisations, in several cases, maybe more than their able bodied counterparts

Employment of disabled people is the key issue that should be tackled first because it provides a “win-win” situation for all participants. Disabled people win because they gain economically and the industry wins because they get committed and enthusiastic contributors to their economy.

Once disabled people become economically important, and what is more, are perceived to be “contributors to” as opposed to “a burden on” the economy, the other things will follow more easily, like:

- Focus on their health,
- their education,
- the need to equip them, as and when required, with the necessary skills and training required for employment, and
- the need for an accessible and safe working place.

Secondly, the reach of the corporate sector is vast as they operate in some of the remotest parts of the country. This gives us a priceless opportunity to leverage them for work with disabled people in areas where resources are scarce. They can act as catalysts for rehabilitation just as they act as catalysts for economic development of the region.

It is being increasingly recognised that though governments have a crucial role in shaping social policy and providing an enabling environment for equal opportunities, productive partnerships between the state, the public sector, the private sector and society are needed to foster socially sustainable development. Countries throughout the world are working to enhance the role of the private sector in their national development because it is central to reducing poverty. Private sector development stimulates economic growth and creates jobs.

Privatisation creates the fiscal space that allows governments to allocate greater resources to the social sector.

### **Setting a Practical Agenda for Future Action**

- To get all Central and State Co-ordination Committees, set out in the Act, functional by the year 1998. The Ministry of Welfare has just assured us that a chief commissioner would be appointed soon.
- Formulating a Vision 2000: All responsible corporate citizens shall identify and generate opportunities for employing disabled people as 5% of their workforce. To support corporate sector in these efforts, the Government should immediately formulate incentives as set out in the Act. At the Central level these could be a relief in income or corporate taxes, at the State level it could be a relief in sales tax and at the local level a relief in maybe, property tax.
- To increase seminars and workshops to provide the much-needed exposure to most recent research, best practices and cutting-edge technology. Apart from knowledge sharing, it provides participants with the opportunity to explore partnership possibilities with other development agencies. Though it is like a horse and water situation. You can take the horse to the water but you cannot make it drink. You can provide and equip a disabled individual with skills and education but this would be a useless exercise if the individual cannot find gainful employment.
- To increase corporate sponsored sports and other such events and use the media to provide visibility and awareness among people.

### **In Conclusion**

I have a quote from a native Australian woman: "If you have come to help me, you can go back home. But if you see my struggle as part of your own survival, then perhaps we can work together."

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## PANEL DISCUSSION—ROLE OF NCPEDP

The following is an excerpt of the discussion that took place at the final session of the symposium. The panellists were:

- Javed Abidi, Executive Director, NCPEDP.
- N.Dharamarajan, General Manager (Human Resources) Britannia Industries Ltd.
- Dr. Shalini Joshi, Programme Officer, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.
- Antony Samy, Executive Director, Worth Trust.
- Lal Advani, President, Indian Association for Special Education and Rehabilitation.

The proceedings were moderated by Dr.M.J.Thomas.

**Dr.M.J.Thomas:** The idea of the panel discussion is to have a brain-storming session on the role of NCPEDP, and what they should do to promote the cause of employment for the disabled. Please put your questions to the panellists.

**Vani Sukumar, Spastics Society of India:** I personally feel that it is essential to have these forum meetings more often. There is a lack of communication amongst NGOs and such fora allow them to exchange information. NCPEDP's role seems to be that of co-ordinating between all the concerned parties.

**Javed Abidi:** Before work starts you have to go to the consumers—whether they are NGOs or disabled people—and take them into consideration and consultation. It was in 1995 that a massive exercise was undertaken. A National level seminar was conducted in Delhi where a lot of NGOs from across the country, disabled people, people from the government, key Ministries and corporates were invited. After that,

a unanimous opinion emerged that this kind of work requires an exclusive organisation; it cannot be a project of an existing organisation.

It was consciously decided that we should set up an organisation because it is not a time-bound activity that can be achieved in two, three or even five years. It is a process, and therefore, it is important to have an organisation that will build up a course in consultation with you and with your support.

But, consultations have to be an ongoing activity. We have had a symposium in Delhi, and we are having one now in Bangalore. We will be going to the East and West of the country also. But, at the same time, what is important is that you should remain in touch with us. Give us continuous feedback from your side, as to what we are doing and whether we are on the right track. Collection of data, we have already said yes. We should have centralised information as far as possible. Now do not expect miracles! But we will certainly try very hard within the resources that we have.

**Rukmini Krishnaswamy, Spastics Society of Karnataka:** As Javed said, it has to be a two-way communication. And that is a problem. For some reason, we get demotivated or we have other things to work at, and we do not communicate. Suddenly, we wake up and see there is not enough communication. We have to discipline ourselves a little more and start communicating.

**Javed Abidi:** I want to thank you, Mrs. Krishnaswamy for saying a few sentences which I was finding difficult to say myself. It is very important that the communication be a two-way process.

**Lal Advani:** Disabilities are diverse, and so are their needs. You cannot meet two thousand needs at one time. I think the Centre should decide on priorities. You have limited sources and fulfilling every need takes time. I think without that we will not know what to do. Therefore, probably the Centre could think of some kind of a mechanism that decides on priorities.

**Prof. R S Chauhan, National Institute for Visually Handicapped, Dehradun:** Since NCPEDP is going to look after the needs of all the categories of disability I think this assumes still more significance. If blind people say one thing, it may not be equally suitable to the

other categories. And therefore, if we have to generate mutual confidence and mutual trust, this priority should be very open.

**Javed Abidi:** I absolutely agree with that and also agree with what Mr. Advani said earlier. Once feedback has been received, we need to decide on a short-term action plan and a long-term action plan.

**Lal Advani:** And what should be the time frame for that plan? A plan that is prioritized for today may be valid for two or three years but in that timeframe the priorities may change. So I think, perhaps every five or four years, we need to take a fresh look at the emerging needs and new priorities that may come up. To my mind the industry is changing so fast, production techniques are changing so fast that we should also collect data on job modification so that employment could be promoted. What are the jobs available? What are the needs of the disabled population? And what modifications can be made to make jobs accessible to disabled people?

**Amita Joseph, British DFID, New Delhi:** Having a data bank where someone can get information is wonderful, because there is a lot of communication gap. But I would also like to state one more thing. NCPEDP could discover jobs that are not seen in our traditional way of thinking for the disabled. You could do some research in this sphere.

**Dr. M.J.Thomas:** Let me just ask people from the corporate world and people who have been training disabled persons. Suppose you want to employ disabled people, what kind of data would you look for?

**N.Dharmarajan, Brittania Industries:** Basically, a skills inventory; the number of people available and the skills that they possess.

**Question\*:** If I was an employer, I would ask for the job vacancies I have. If you can create a data bank where you have the list of people with various kinds of skills in position and it is readily available, that would definitely facilitate employment. It is a kind of playing the role of a placement agency.

**Lal Advani:** That is the function of the National Employment

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\*Wherever it was not possible to identify the speaker and it was felt that the question was important, we have included the question as it is.

Cell and I think we should leave it to them. But one thing NCPEDP could do is to have a six-monthly or a three-monthly bulletin describing success stories. Describing what persons with disabilities have been doing, that kind of a thing. If the Centre develops a bulletin or a pamphlet, or even films, I think it will have a tremendous impact. As our friend from Britannia said, the corporates would want to know what kind of skills the disabled have. They have a biscuit making industry, what kind of people could be employed in the particular positions that they have. This information could be provided through the pamphlets and the regular bulletins published by the Centre.

**Question:** We also need to specify the areas in which NCPEDP could represent the NGOs at the centre, so that the NGOs need not be going to the Government independently and asking for policy changes. We could look upon this organisation as an apex organisation.

**Javed Abidi:** Please realise that we also have our limitations, at least as of now. If, from somewhere, with the efforts of some good souls present in this hall, we are able to land up with a budget of a few crores, we could have the level of an organisation which is needed in the country! Yesterday, during our presentation, we tried to make a distinction between the dream and the reality. The dream is to have an organisation of a kind where you have a tremendous data bank, where you have a library, where you have all the information, and at a moment's notice you can transmit information to people who need it. But let's be practical; we have to keep the realities in mind.

We have already clarified yesterday that we are not *an employment exchange*, nor a placement agency. We will only be an advocacy organisation—we will be an activist organisation and we will try to network between the various groups. Now, as far as a data bank is concerned, we know a little bit about each other but all the necessary information has to be collected and collated at one place. The second is to find out from the industry as to what kind of skills they are looking for. So, the attempt that NCPEDP would make in the coming few months would be on these two accounts. In addition to that if there is anything you want to suggest, please let us know.

**Lal Advani:** If it has to be a catalyst between the disabled group and the industry, it will have to equip itself with the kind of things that I was suggesting—success stories demonstrating the achievements of disabled people; how jobs can be modified ... because just the function of an employment service, I do not think this Centre will be able to perform. It should be a *super* advocacy group.

**Dr.T.Murali, National Institute for Mentally Handicapped, Secunderabad:** I think this is a very important aspect because currently the NGOs are on one side of the fence and the Government is on the other. So there must be an agency that acts as a liaison between all these organisations. When we talk about employment for the disabled it is not only one Ministry that comes into the picture. An organisation of this nature, with the backing of all the people as well as the NGOs working in the area, can be much more effective in advocacy. We should consider that all the other agencies around India should cooperate and support it to start with.

**Lal Advani:** Job identification is of crucial importance. Nothing of the kind has ever been done in the country, either in the public sector or the private sector. There have been suggestions from time to time. Job identification has to be an ongoing process. It can not be a one-time process. And I would think that NCPEDP should undertake this task. I understand that the US and the Indian Governments are jointly setting up a National Research Institute in Delhi. I think we have gone on too long on hunches. We must now have solid research to back our advocacy.

**R.Ramachandra, ADD-India, Bangalore:** Well, I am a little apprehensive about research. There are umpteen research papers on every conceivable subject in this country. I am not against research—please do not misunderstand me—but I think we also need to see how this will benefit the disabled people, particularly in the rural areas.

**Javed Abidi:** To some extent I guess we will have to do that because one of the problems that we are facing is that we are all shooting in the dark, not knowing exactly in which direction to go. So some amount of research, some studies, some basic data will have to be collected and we have already started the process.

**Dr.M.J.Thomas:** What would be the contribution of the corporate sector. What kind of support can NCPEDP hope to get from the corporate sector?

**Question:** If you have noticed, in the last ten years the job market has been stagnant. In fact, it has come down. Now, in the age of liberalisation we are hearing about downsizing, etc., so the scene is not very bright. But certainly, one of the things that the corporate sector could do is to share technology and other facilities through a system of having disabled people as apprentices. I think that would be a very useful training ground for disabled persons. They will be able to observe how work is done in these places.

Mr. Abidi, would it be possible for you to compile a list of the jobs which could be done by the different categories of disabled people? And a list of the self-employment schemes introduced by the various NGOs in various states in India. The self-employment scheme could be different in Maharashtra than in Kerala. So we could share this experience.

**Salil Chaturvedi, Editor, India Feature Service, New Delhi:** I think that this organisation should be more macro-oriented. There should be an exchange of information, and the best way of doing it is to have a quarterly or a bi-monthly newsletter that reaches out to the target audience: the industry, NGOs, and disabled individuals. Also, I would be interested in knowing what our Japanese friends have to say about the role of NCPEDP.

**Nobuo Matsubara, Specialist, Employment Measures for the Disabled Division, Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour, Japan:** We have an organisation similar to NCPEDP. The conditions prevailing in Japan are quite different and there is no organisation exactly like this. We do have a continuous system of data processing in order to help educate the disabled about their disability and the compatible facilities available. Continuous investigated data is available and that is being provided on request to any organisation, NGOs and others. One suggestion that I would like to make is that NCPEDP should act as a nodal point trying to influence the Government to cooperate with the Government and the NGOs.

**Javed Abidi:** We will be acting as a catalyst, and we will be advocating for the disabled. We will also think of ways and means to practically ensure that your expectations are fulfilled to the largest extent possible.

**Chapal Khasnabis, Mobility India, Bangalore:** I have three worries about NC PEDP: It should not become another Ministry of Labour or Ministry of Welfare! It should not forget the rural disabled people, and NC PEDP should not become a theoretical organisation.

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## CLOSING ADDRESS

**Javed Abidi**

**(Executive Director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People)**

We have had, I think, a very useful symposium. As far as NCPEDP is concerned, we have benefited tremendously. We have just started laying down policy for ourselves, planning for the future. We had a seminar in 1995 before we even set up the Centre and then we have had two other symposiums. But this particular symposium has been tremendously useful to our Centre. A lot of very important points have been made and I would like to assure you that we have been taking extensive notes.

It goes without saying that we will be in touch with you through various means of communication. We are thinking of bringing out a newsletter. I cannot promise you how soon, but soon. One thing which has emerged very clearly is that it is a tremendous task; and a task which should have been accomplished as of yesterday.

India is a vast country with a vast population. So we have to think in terms of our needs, our aspirations and chalk out a programme which is pragmatic, which is time-bound. And there is a lot of frustration. There is a lot of anger. There are a lot of feelings involved here. We have already said that we are talking about a vast population. We are talking about 60 million people, we are talking of 5 to 6% of our country's population.

Communication is a two way process. I emphasise on this because, in our various other roles, we try to communicate and we find

it to be a one way process. I am extremely grateful to our friends from the other sectors, to the international agencies, the corporate sector, and the media. It was good to see the government also participating actively. The Labour Ministry was represented here, as was the Welfare Ministry. Hopefully, they have taken note of our concerns.

Dr. Shalini Joshi used a very interesting phrase in her address—Vision 2000. So let us all have a Vision 2000.

I thank our friends from Japan—all the officials of the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled. We are all partners in this and if we join hands, I am convinced that things will change, and quickly! Thank you very much, have a safe journey, good bye.

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## CLOSING ADDRESS

**Dr. Shalini Joshi**

**(Programme Officer, Disabled Persons' Welfare Unit,  
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation)**

I do hope that from here, we can move ahead towards our goal of creating a world of equal opportunities and a life of dignity for people with disabilities. Many thanks to our Japanese friends for their support and co-operation. I do hope they have enjoyed the symposium and their visit to India despite their car breakdowns and traffic jams in Delhi! We hope to continue on a long-term participation. Thank you very much. Good bye.

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## CLOSING ADDRESS

**Mari Okutsu**

**(Director, Vocational Guidance Department, National  
Vocational Rehabilitation Centre of the Disabled, Japan)**

Ladies and Gentlemen, at the last stage of the Indo-Japanese symposium on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities, I am sure you would all agree that the last two days have been very fruitful for both of the countries.

During this symposium and panel discussion, we have heard the efforts and strategies taken in both public and private sectors to promote employment for people with disabilities. I commend the efforts of NCPEDP on taking initiatives in expanding the employment opportunities for people with disabilities. I believe that all of these presentations and discussions will be useful for the future initiatives of all sectors. On behalf of Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to RGF, NCPEDP, Directorate General of Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour and all the secretariat members for having made this joint symposium very successful. Thank you very much.

# SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

## 8.12.97 - MONDAY

1100hrs to 1110hrs	Welcome	Dr. V. Krishnamurthy, Trustee, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People
1110hrs to 1113hrs	Lighting of the lamp	Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People
1113hrs to 1120hrs	Inaugural Address	Mrs. Sonia Gandhi
1120hrs to 1125hrs	Opening Remarks	Mr. Kozo Okabe, President, Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled
1125hrs to 1200hrs	Break	
1200hrs to 1230hrs		<b>'Measures taken in Japan for promoting employment of the people with disabilities'.</b> Mr. Nobuo Matsubara, Specialist, Employment Measures for the Disabled Division, Ministry of Labour, Government of Japan
1230hrs to 1245hrs		<b>'Private Sector's Initiatives for employment of people with disabilities'.</b> Ms. Minako Nishijima, Deputy Director, Labour Legislation Division, Japan Federation of Employers' Association, Japan

1245hrs to 1315hrs	<b>'Vocational rehabilitation services in Japan'.</b> Ms. Mari Okutsu, Director, Vocational Guidance Department, National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre of the Disabled, Japan
1315hrs to 1400hrs	Break
1400hrs to 1430hrs	Discussion
1430hrs to 1500hrs	<b>'Promoting employment opportunities for people with disabilities in India-The role of NCPEDP'.</b> Mr. Javed Abidi, Executive Director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled People, Delhi
1500hrs to 1530hrs	Discussion
1530hrs to 1600hrs	Break
1600hrs to 1630hrs	<b>'Overview of the measures taken by Government of India to promote employment for people with disabilities'.</b> Mr. S. Krishnan, Joint Secretary, Directorate General of Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour, Government of India, Delhi
1630hrs to 1700hrs	Discussion
<b><u>9.12.97 - TUESDAY</u></b>	
0900hrs to 0930hrs	<b>'Overview of vocational rehabilitation in India'.</b> Mr. K.K. Baksi, Secretary, Ministry of Welfare, Government of India, Delhi

0930hrs to 1000hrs	Discussion
1000hrs to 1030hrs	<p><b>'Initiatives in private sector industries in India to promote employment for people with disabilities.'</b></p> <p>Mr. Vikram Rajaram, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Titan Industries, Bangalore</p>
1030hrs to 1100hrs	Discussion
1100hrs to 1130hrs	Break
1130hrs to 1200hrs	<p><b>'Initiatives by NGOs to promote employment for people with disabilities in India'.</b></p> <p>Mr. Antony Samy, Executive Director, WORTH Trust, Katpadi</p>
1200hrs to 1230hrs	Discussion
1230hrs to 1300hrs	<p><b>Perspectives of people with disabilities on their opportunities for employment in India'.</b></p> <p>Mr. Lal Advani, President, Indian Association for Special Education and Rehabilitation, Delhi</p>
1300hrs to 1330hrs	Discussion
1330hrs to 1430hrs	Break
1430hrs to 1500hrs	<p><b>'Legislation in India and its effect on employment of people with disabilities'.</b></p> <p>Dr. Shalini Joshi, Programme Officer, Disabled Persons' Welfare Unit, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Delhi</p>

1500hrs to 1615hrs	<b>Panel discussion-'What strategies can NCPEDP adopt, to promote employment for people with disabilities in India'.</b> Panellists: 1) NCPEDP 2) RGF 3) DGET 4) Ministry of Welfare 5) Representative of Industry 6) Representative of the NGOs 7) Representative of people with disabilities Moderated by : Dr. Maya Thomas and Dr. M.J. Thomas
1615hrs to 1630hrs	Break
1630hrs to 1650hrs	Closing address.
1650hrs to 1700hrs	Vote of thanks.





राजीव गांधी संस्थापन

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